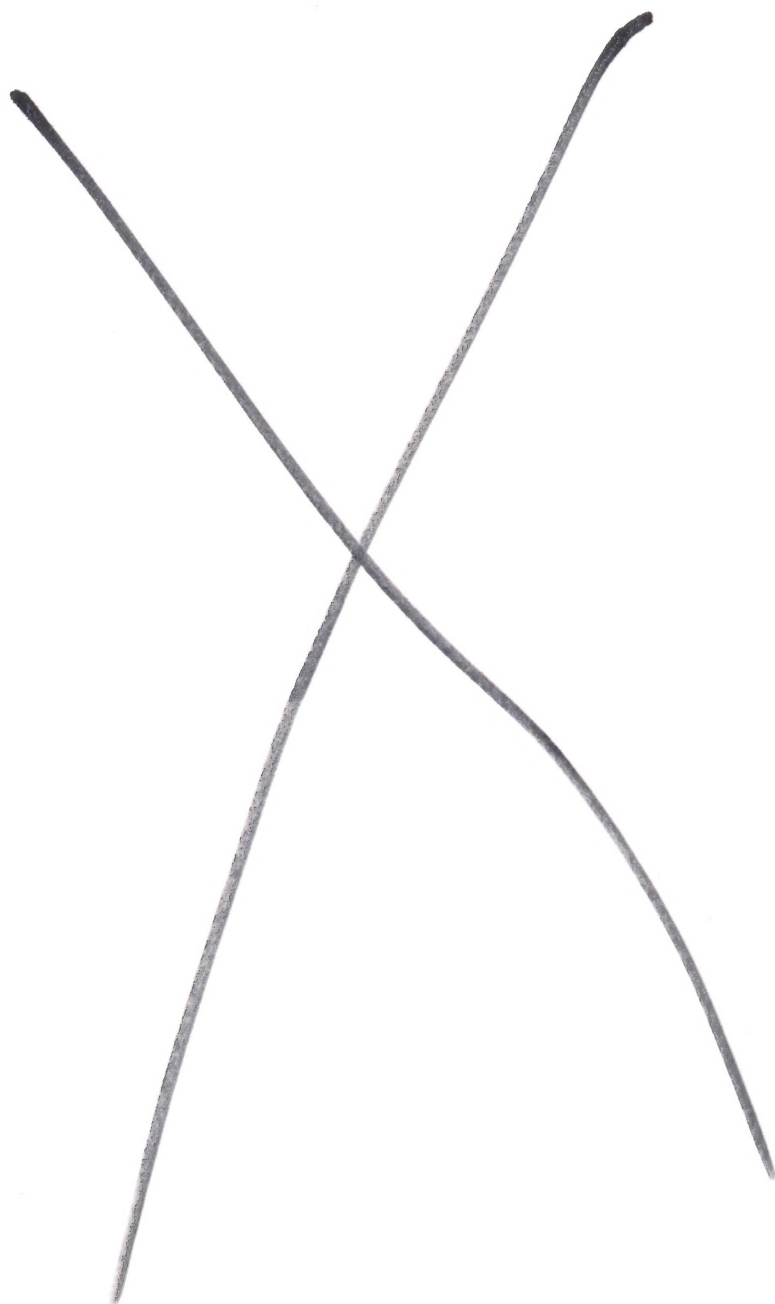


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HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY OF  
SOUTHERN  
CALIFORNIA

# SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY





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SOCIETY OF  
SOUTHERN  
CALIFORNIA

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THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA was founded November 1, 1883, and incorporated February 13, 1891. It has enjoyed an unbroken record of continuous activity and growth. Commencing in 1884, and each year through 1934, the Society issued an *Annual Publication*. In 1935 the *Quarterly* was initiated. The Society's publications through 1976 have been described in a concise abstract of articles and separately indexed by Anna Marie and Everett Gordon Hager (comps.), *A Bibliography* (1958), *The Topical Index* (1959), and *Cumulative Index* (1977). A list of books published by the Society with prices is available on request from the Society. Membership classifications, which include subscription to the *Quarterly* are:

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ON THE COVER: A rare cyanotype view of the Lummis House taken by Charles F. Lummis, ca. 1904–1906, in the collection of the Historical Society of Southern California. Cover designed by Hortensia Chu.



EL ALISAL

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The Historical Society of Southern California, founded in 1883, is committed to preserving, interpreting and promoting the history of Southern California. Through its programs and publications, the Society educates people of all ages about the cultures and events of the past that have shaped our contemporary experience.

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# THE LUMMIS HOUSE & THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

*El Alisal* (The Lummis House), built between 1898 and 1912 by Charles F. Lummis and pictured on our cover in a cyanotype made in 1904–1906 by Lummis himself, has served as the headquarters for the Historical Society of Southern California (HSSC) since 1965. In 1971, when the state turned over metropolitan parks to the cities in which they were located, HSSC made a lease agreement with the city of Los Angeles with the stipulation that the Society could use it for office and program space in return for keeping the Lummis Home open to the public.

Although an *El Alisal* restoration project has long been a dream of the Society, it is a costly and lengthy undertaking, one complicated by the presence of the Society's staff and operations. Ultimately, the Society's needs outstripped what the house could offer, especially in respect to office space and the accommodations required by modern technology. More importantly, daily occupancy by Society staff threatened the home's integrity. Consequently, this past spring the Board of Directors and the staff decided to give the landmark home the rest it has long deserved. On May 1, 2006, HSSC's administrative staff moved to offices in Pasadena. Plans for *El Alisal*'s restoration and related fundraising efforts are underway. In the meantime, it remains the official headquarters of HSSC. Our relationship with this landmark and the Lummis family is a treasured part of our own history. The Lummis Home and the surrounding water-wise garden remain integral to our K–12 educational outreach program, Keeping History Alive. The home and the garden are open to the public for docent-led tours Friday through Sunday, 12–4 P.M. For more information please call the HSSC business office, (626) 440-1883, or the Lummis Home, (323) 222-0546.

—DENISE SPOONER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, HSSC





# “SWISS CHALET” IN LONG BEACH

By Louise Ivers

The years before World War I were a time of great building activity in Long Beach, California. Not only were many commercial buildings constructed in the burgeoning downtown around Pine Avenue, but a large number of homes were built along the ocean front, in the blocks immediately north of Ocean Avenue (now Boulevard), and in the areas west, east, and north of the central business district. Most of the early houses displayed late Victorian, Mission Revival, and American Colonial styles of architecture, but in the first decades of the twentieth century thousands of homes were designed in a mode that would eventually be called the “California bungalow.” This seemingly rustic kind of house was often referred to in journals of the period as the “Swiss chalet.” Many of them still exist in Long Beach, thanks to the creation of historic districts, and were usually described in the *Daily Telegram*, the local newspaper, as Swiss chalets before the Great War. Only occasionally did local reporters use the word “bungalow” when writing about smaller homes of this type.<sup>1</sup>

Long Beach experienced phenomenal growth in the early years of the twentieth century, seen in a 1905 advertisement in the *Daily Telegram* that proclaimed, “What Money Combined with the Grandest Natural Advantages Can Do Will Be Demonstrated in the Next Two Years at Alamitos Bay.”<sup>2</sup> This boosterism was accompanied by a drawing of young ladies in knee-length wool bathing costumes, hats, black stockings, and shoes, frolicking in the waves. The image of Long Beach as a seaside resort and vacation destination was already well-established. That same summer a newspaper headline shouted, “Great Land Deal! Capitalists

Acquire Long Beach Property and Will Make It Another Venice.”<sup>3</sup> Among these “capitalists” were Abbot Kinney, developer of the Venice area in Los Angeles, and Dana Burks, mayor of Ocean Park. The Venice in Long Beach was slated for the west side of town. It was never built, but the Naples suburb at the eastern end of Alamitos Bay was constructed around picturesque canals. The Hotel Napoli opened there in 1907. The best-known ocean-front hotel near downtown Long Beach was the Virginia, built between 1906 and 1908 and designed by Los Angeles architect John C. Austin. Also overlooking the water was the Long Beach Auditorium, designed by J. Cather Newsom of Los Angeles, completed in November 1905.<sup>4</sup> Other major buildings finished in 1906 included the First National Bank, a five-story building with a distinctive clock tower (now L’Opera restaurant), a block-long public market, a skating rink, and a combined YMCA/YWCA club house.

By 1907, the city was referred to as the “Queen of the Beaches,” and a record number of tourists rented rooms in hotels and boarding houses, apartments, and even tents. During the 1907 summer season, 106,421 visitors “[p]assed through the turnstile at the Long Beach Bath House for a bath in either the surf or the plunge.”<sup>5</sup> The “plunge” was a huge indoor salt-water swimming pool near the Pike amusement zone and the auditorium. To the west of the bath house were a new roller coaster and a vaudeville theater. Chatauqua performances and church meetings drew many other visitors to Long Beach as well. Another tourist attraction was the ostrich farm on American Avenue (now Long Beach Boulevard).

The industrial section near the Long Beach harbor was growing, too. In 1907, the Craig Shipbuilding Company decided to locate there, and it was followed by the Edison power plant and the Los Angeles Lumber Company. Also indicative of the city’s growth was Andrew Carnegie’s donation of \$30,000 to construct a neoclassic library designed by F. P. Burnham of Los Angeles.<sup>6</sup> Houses of the 1880s and 1890s were already being demolished or moved to make way for larger buildings in the central business district.

By 1910, the population of Long Beach was ten times what it had been in 1900. The *Daily Telegram* boasted, “Today Chatauqua is a memory and in its stead is a bustling commercial city whose motto is ‘We do things.’”<sup>7</sup> Ocean and American avenues were being paved, the number of automobile owners was increasing, and gasoline stations, parking and



repair garages, and car dealerships became more common. The former fringe suburb of Alamitos had become "essentially the residence section of Long Beach and is thickly settled with handsome homes of varied styles of architecture."<sup>8</sup>

In 1911, the "Queen of the Beaches" was the fastest-growing city in the United States, and during that year "the number of homes built in Long Beach [was] especially large, and the fame of Long Beach as a home city [had] grown."<sup>9</sup> Most building permits for houses ranged from \$1,500 to \$3,500, but more expensive structures were also recorded. The *Long Beach Daily Telegram* proclaimed, "All those connected in any way with the business of planning, building and equipping residence, apartment house and other structures are now enjoying rushing business."<sup>10</sup> In December 1911 another newspaper article stated that approximately six hundred houses costing from \$800 to \$6,000 were constructed in the city that year. Some of these were "Swiss chalets."

Until 1910 most major buildings in Long Beach were designed by architects from Los Angeles and Pasadena, but three local firms, Austin & Sedgwick, Sholes & Lochridge, and Harry W. Metcalf, began to receive notice in the press. In 1911, Austin & Sedgwick completed plans for a comfort station (public restrooms) and a bandstand near the auditorium and Sholes & Lochridge constructed another bandstand in Pacific Park. These three firms designed numerous Swiss chalets as well.

In 1913 Long Beach residents, who had numbered 17,809 in the 1910 census, owned approximately 1,500 automobiles, "while thousands more visit[ed] . . . weekly."<sup>11</sup> At that time the city had forty miles of paved streets, a great advance since 1910, and some were located near the beach to afford scenic views for motorists. In 1914 the city was still experiencing growth. "Today Long Beach is pre-eminently the city beautiful of America . . . for people of wealth and culture will continue to locate here and help develop a city of magnificent homes and charming environments," the *Long Beach Daily Telegram* exclaimed.<sup>12</sup>

Building of commercial and residential structures began to dwindle in 1915 when local architects' commissions grew fewer in number. However, the famous Jackrabbit Racer replaced the earlier roller coaster at the Pike amusement zone that year, and the Laughlin Theater, by Irving Gill, on Pine Avenue opened in 1915. The Balboa Moving Picture Studio, which located in Long Beach in 1913, was making films at its miniature city built



in 1915 in Signal Hill, but the major contracts were for submarines at the California Shipbuilding Company. The clouds of war were on the horizon for the United States. Although World War I began in Europe in 1914, this country only entered the conflict on April 6, 1917, because of German attacks on shipping. Home building ceased altogether, because materials were garnered for other uses by the government. Construction did not resume until after Armistice Day, November 11, 1918. Still another building boom occurred in the 1920s when Long Beach began a new period of rapid growth and the last Swiss chalets were constructed.

The development of the American Arts and Crafts bungalow in its various sub-styles was influenced by various factors. In addition to the elements found in rural houses in the Swiss Alps, Japanese wooden construction was an important antecedent to this type of home.<sup>13</sup> These influences were combined with the architectural concepts of the Arts and Crafts movement, as well as with the early twentieth-century idea that homes should be appropriate to their environments, as seen in the Prairie houses of the Midwest. Beach cottages and rustic resorts of the late Victorian era were still other predecessors of the "Swiss chalets" of Long Beach.

Even if they did not travel to Europe or Asia, architects could see replicas of Swiss and Japanese buildings at the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago and at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition of 1904 in St. Louis. Charles and Henry Greene of Pasadena, who designed the Adelaide Tichenor and Jennie Reeve houses in Long Beach in 1904, visited the Chicago exposition on their way from the East to the West Coast.<sup>14</sup> Charles Greene went to see the Japanese Garden and Pavilion at the St. Louis exposition specifically at the request of Mrs. Tichenor.<sup>15</sup> She and Jennie Reeve had traveled to China and Japan two years earlier.<sup>16</sup> The houses by Greene & Greene built in 1904 undoubtedly influenced the later Swiss chalets created by Long Beach architects.

Profusely illustrated guidebooks to the expositions were available for purchase, and undoubtedly some of these made their way to Long Beach. Japan's contribution to the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, the Hoo-den (figure 1), was a replica of an ancient Japanese temple built by workmen from that country. It had curved gables and flaring eaves supported by exposed rafters. Wooden posts and beams were not painted and were visible on the exterior of the structure. Ample rice-paper windows



Figure 1. Ho-o-den, the Japanese Pavilion, Chicago World's Fair, 1893.  
From William E. Lee, *Beautiful Scenes of the White City*  
(Chicago: Laird & Lee, 1894). Author's collection.





*Figure 2. Idaho Building, Chicago World's Fair, 1893.  
From Ben C. Truman, History of the World's Fair (Richmond, VA:  
M. A. Winter & Co., 1893), 499. Author's collection.*



were placed in rows to allow filtered light into the building. At the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition was a replica of the seventeenth-century Yōmeimon Gateway at Nikko, and the actual gateway of the Temple of Nio Mon was transported to St. Louis for the Japanese exhibit. The former was constructed without nails by Japanese carpenters at the site.<sup>17</sup>

The Idaho Building at the World's Columbian Exposition (figure 2) was a Swiss chalet with widely projecting eaves and latticed balconies supported by large brackets. Like the Ho-o-den, it was of wooden construction. The façade had a large, rather low gable sheltering the building.

Gustav Stickley, a major proponent of the Arts and Crafts movement in the United States, published *The Craftsman* magazine from 1901 to 1916. He produced "Mission" furniture in his upstate New York factory and founded the magazine to advertise his wares. In 1903, the first "Craftsman House" was featured in the publication, which also had articles about the handicrafts of many cultures around the world. The Arts and Crafts movement promoted simplicity in life, art, and architecture. Stickley and other supporters of this aesthetic eschewed superfluous ornament in furniture and architecture, as they believed that materials should dictate the design of artifacts and buildings, that houses should be oriented to an outdoor life and be full of light, and that middle-class Americans should live in "simple, comfortable and beautiful" homes.<sup>18</sup>

*The Craftsman* published such articles as "The Craftsman's Life and Lot in Japan," by William Elliot Griffis in 1907<sup>19</sup> and "The Use of Wood in Switzerland," by Wendell G. Corthell in 1903.<sup>20</sup> In the latter article, photographs of Swiss chalets were reproduced along with descriptions of their characteristics. Corthell stated, "The wide, overhanging eaves, from three to nine feet, which are universal, are to protect the occupants from the summer sun and winter snow."<sup>21</sup> He also mentioned that "the windows are in groups of two, three and even four in a close row, and then a wide space of wood."<sup>22</sup> These elements appeared in the Swiss chalets of Long Beach.

Since *The Craftsman* was a popular magazine, it is likely that architects living in Long Beach would have subscribed to it. However, they needed only to read the *Daily Telegram* in 1910 when a series of articles by Gustav Stickley titled "Craftsman Homes" was published in the paper. These were illustrated with plans and drawings of both the exteriors and interiors of houses, accompanied by Stickley's columns expounding the

Arts and Crafts philosophy. He wrote, "[S]o far in this country we have but one architectural characteristic, except in the skyscrapers, that could be called particularly American. That is our use of wood."<sup>23</sup> Stickley espoused the open plan in home design. He advocated "no needless passages between rooms, involving doors to be constantly opened and closed. . . . [T]he connections," he said, "between rooms are direct."<sup>24</sup> Stickley also believed that homes should not be cluttered and declared "Wall spaces that are occupied with bookcases, cupboards, built-in seats or well-placed windows are interesting in themselves and need no additional ornamentation."<sup>25</sup> Craftsman houses always included fireplaces, Stickley explained, "because the warmth and welcome, the sense of home comfort and restfulness that are associated with the fireplace have come to symbolize all that home means for us."<sup>26</sup> In addition to wood construction, "cement if rightly handled," he said, "is the most adaptable of building materials."<sup>27</sup> Stickley thought cement applied to metal lath was appropriate for house construction. All of these elements he wrote about were found in the pre-war "Swiss chalets" of Long Beach.

Stickley often published photographs of houses—most of them bungalows and some of them bungalows of the Swiss chalet type—constructed in California in *The Craftsman* magazine, so many of the characteristics discussed above were already commonly found in the residences of the southland. In addition to *The Craftsman*, he put out two volumes of the collected articles. These were titled *Craftsman Homes* and *More Craftsman Homes*, published respectively in 1909 and 1912. Southern California houses appeared in these as well.

Besides the Tichenor and Reeve houses, there were two other buildings in Long Beach that were antecedents to the Swiss chalets by Austin & Sedgwick, Metcalf & Davies, and other local firms. These were both designed by Arthur B. Benton of Los Angeles. The first was the Ebell Club of 1905 on the beach front, and the second was Benton's own cottage of 1907 on the bluff overlooking the ocean. The exterior of the Ebell Club was constructed of cedar pier pilings and three-inch-thick redwood siding, with balconies of cedar bulwarks and knotted ropes in a nautical theme. Board and batten interior walls complemented exposed cedar structural members, and old anchors, suspended by rusted chains from dismantled ships, formed the light fixtures.<sup>28</sup> This novel, rustic building was certainly well known in the city.



Although it had reinforced concrete walls, Benton's Tudor cottage was half-timbered both inside and out, with eight-by-eight-inch exposed ceiling beams and redwood-plank ceilings on the first floor. The rafters in the second-story rooms were also exposed. The fireplace in the living room was constructed of boulders.<sup>29</sup> This house had many elements that soon appeared in Long Beach Swiss chalets, such as projecting eaves and rafters, exposed interior beams, and built-in furnishings.

In 1914 an article in the *Daily Telegram* characterized the California bungalow and the Swiss chalet in particular:

Southern Californians generally have come to recognize the charm of the bungalow and to realize its adaptability to a climate and the situation such as we here enjoy. . . . There is something altogether charming about a broad-eaved bungalow with its generous pillars, its beam ceilings and broad fireplace. It spells comfort and contentment and simple luxury that more pretentious types fail to convey.

The architecture of different parts of the world has been drawn from to meet local conditions. To India is given credit for the name and the broad verandas; to Switzerland the rustic appearance, projecting roof effects; and for variegated exterior and interior comforts to Southern California itself.

The California bungalow is not usually a large or expensive house, but it possesses charm, refinement and good taste, at the same time being thoroughly modern as to comforts and conveniences.

On account of its picturesque appearances it wins admiration in whichever community it is introduced. Many thousands of these houses have been erected in this vicinity during the past few years. Some are perched upon the hillsides, and many are found beneath the spreading limbs of the oaks or sycamores in the picturesque canyons and valleys near at hand.

Of late the Swiss chalet has come into vogue as a modification of the bungalow type, usually having as leading features the snow-white composition roof and heavy timbered effects.<sup>30</sup>

Many of the finest Swiss chalets in Long Beach were designed by William Horace Austin, alone and in partnership with Westel W. Sedgwick or Harvey H. Lochridge, and by Harry W. Metcalf, alone and in partnership with Hugh R. Davies. Austin was born on March 12, 1881, in Abilene, Kansas, and his family moved to Long Beach in 1895. Although his father was a doctor, he became a carpenter<sup>31</sup> and was first listed in the city directory as practicing this trade in 1902. By 1904, he was listed as a builder and contractor and a partner in the firm of Barton & Austin. In 1905 he advertised in the *Daily Telegram*: "Plans and Esti-



mates Furnished Free, W. Horace Austin, Contractor and Builder."<sup>32</sup> By 1908 Austin was listed in the city directory as an architect, having graduated from an abbreviated course at the Pennsylvania Architectural College in Philadelphia a year or two earlier. In 1910 he formed a partnership with Westel W. Sedgwick, a graduate of the same college.<sup>33</sup> This lasted about two years, and in 1912 Austin joined forces with Harvey H. Lochridge, a graduate of the Beloit College Engineering Department in Wisconsin, who had also studied architecture in Boston. When Lochridge first came to Long Beach in 1907, he worked with Harry W. Metcalf.<sup>34</sup> The firm of Austin & Lochridge lasted a little over a year, and in 1914 the former architect was working alone again. In 1920, Austin was elected a member of the American Institute of Architects.<sup>35</sup> By 1925 his office had twelve employees, including Clarence N. Aldrich, Harold C. Wildman, and Kenneth S. Wing, who later became well known in Southern California.<sup>36</sup> By 1932 Austin had a branch office in Santa Ana that was run by Wildman, and in 1933 they became partners. W. Horace Austin designed many schools throughout California in association with John C. Austin, the Los Angeles architect of the Virginia Hotel in Long Beach, beginning in 1919. Although their last names were the same, they were not related. W. Horace Austin died on July 4, 1942.<sup>37</sup>

Harry W. Metcalf was a partner in the firm of Earhardt & Metcalf in Long Beach in 1907,<sup>38</sup> and that same year he formed a partnership with Harvey Lochridge. This association lasted about two years. In 1912 Hugh R. Davies, who worked as a draftsman for Metcalf, became his partner.<sup>39</sup>

Hugh Robert Davies was born in St. Louis on September 14, 1884, and his family came to Long Beach in 1898. He studied at the Throop Institute (now the California Institute of Technology) in Pasadena, the Wilmerding School of Industrial Art in San Francisco, the University of California, and the University of Southern California, where he pursued an abbreviated architectural program.<sup>40</sup> At Throop Institute the faculty espoused Arts and Crafts aesthetics and offered courses in manual arts.<sup>41</sup> Davies was a draftsman for Metcalf and then his partner from 1912 to 1915. Around 1915 Davies disappeared from the Long Beach architectural scene, resurfacing in 1920. There are no records of any commissions in Long Beach by either Metcalf or Davies from 1916 through 1919, perhaps on account of the wartime hold on construction. In 1923 and 1924 Davies was associated with Edwall D. Baume in the design of both houses and larger projects. Davies was a music lover and president of the Long

Beach Symphony Orchestra Association in the 1930s.<sup>42</sup> He was also a founder of the Pacific Geographical Society<sup>43</sup> and an avid environmentalist. Throughout his life, he traveled extensively not only in the United States but in Europe, North Africa, Asia, and South America. He died on December 23, 1967.<sup>44</sup>

Unfortunately, none of the Long Beach architects wrote about the Swiss chalets they designed. However, an analysis of the houses provides information about Austin's, Metcalf's, and Davies' concepts. They oriented their designs toward the outdoor Southern California lifestyle with an abundance of pergolas and french doors. They also seem to have subscribed to Stickley's ideas about comforting fireplaces and built-in furniture.

The earliest Swiss chalet by Austin discovered so far was the demolished Virginia Country Club House of 1910. It had wide-bracketed eaves, a broad veranda with a balustrade of flat boards resembling those in the Swiss chalet balconies illustrated in Corthell's article in *The Craftsman* and in the Idaho Building at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition (figure 2), and a low frontal gable with projecting rafters. A beam below the gable that ran from one side of the porch to the other had a series of exposed vertical posts supporting the roof. They were similar to the construction of gable ends in traditional Japanese houses. According to the *Daily Telegram*, the clubhouse had a "rough exterior" and was related to the surrounding landscape: "The clubhouse will be furnished prettily inside, and picturesque fireplaces will increase the 'comfy' aspect of things."<sup>45</sup> The overall design of the Virginia Country Club House illustrated the American Arts and Crafts aesthetic discussed in Gustav Stickley's publications.

Austin & Sedgwick designed a number of individual houses and at least two apartment bungalow courts in 1911. These included the demolished Henry Kinzel house (figure 3), described in the *Daily Telegram* as a nine-room Swiss chalet: "The exterior of the house will attract attention, massive white stone columns pointed up with red mortar, and a broad exterior chimney in the same effect, touching off the split and sawn shakes with which the house will be covered. The roof will be of the snowy Malthoid variety."<sup>46</sup> The tapering porch columns were cast "art stone," a type of cement made to look like blocks of stone. Malthoid was a composition roofing material, probably an asbestos product, often placed on Swiss chalets. The white roof gave the illusion that Alpine snow had fallen on it (an anomaly, of course, in sunny Southern California).



The first floor of the Kinzel house had fumed oak woodwork. In *The Craftsman* Gustav Stickley explained the fuming process, which he used for his furniture, as the release of ammonia fumes onto the oiled wood inside a tent for the purpose of accentuating the natural grain of the wood. A tile fireplace and built-in bookcases adorned the Kinzel living room, while there was a “big buffet equipped with plate glass shelves and mirrors of plate glass behind the shelving.”<sup>47</sup> The house also had built-in desks, cabinets, and an ironing board. Stickley advocated built-in furniture in *The Craftsman* to complement the simple lifestyle he proposed for middle-class Americans.

Austin & Sedgwick designed the first apartment bungalow court in Long Beach—the Andrews flats of 1911. It was described in the *Daily Telegram* as “novel,” as a “type which [was] becoming quite popular in Pasadena,” and one that was “expected to be adopted by other builders” in

Figure 3. Austin & Sedgwick, Henry Kinzel Residence.

From F. Jay Gardon, *Architectural Work of Austin and Lochridge* (Long Beach, 1913). Courtesy of the Long Beach Collection, Long Beach Public Library.





Long Beach.<sup>48</sup> The six three-room apartments with individual entrance porches facing a central landscaped courtyard were constructed to look like Swiss chalets and had low gabled white roofs. Stickley had designed rural homes for large plots of land; for this apartment house, Austin & Sedgwick designed small units that shared a communal courtyard, but these were surely more desirable to renters than the typical format of rooms flanking long, dark, and odorous indoor hallways.

Unfortunately, the Andrews flats were demolished, but the Snell flats built in 1911 by Austin & Sedgwick have survived with minor remodeling (figure 4). While the Andrews flats had consisted of one story throughout, the Snell apartments feature two stories at the front and back, connected by one-story wings along the sides of the grassy courtyard. Each one of the twelve apartments has "a private porch with ornamental stone base"<sup>49</sup> and bracketed hood as well as an individual rear entrance (figure 5). The brackets under the front-porch hoods resemble an "outside brace" pictured in Edward S. Morse's *Japanese Homes and Their Surroundings* of 1886. Austin may have been familiar with this popular book. The exterior of the Snell flats is clad in shakes, and the original roof was of white Malthoid like that of the Kinzel house. Windows of different sizes are placed in groups of two, three, and four, like those of actual Swiss chalets in the Alps.

Each of the Snell apartments contained a living room, dining room, kitchen, screened porch, dressing room, and bathroom. Since there were no bedrooms, Holmes disappearing beds were originally built into the living and dining rooms. These could be rolled under buffets or bookcases. The Holmes Company, in fact, opened an office in January 1912 "in the same building with the architectural firm of Austin & Sedgwick,"<sup>50</sup> right after the grand opening of the Snell apartments. Other built-ins placed in these flats, which were completely furnished, were desks, buffets, bookcases, and dressing-room drawers. In the second decade of the twentieth century, apartments were commonly rented with furnishings, especially in a resort like Long Beach where tourists came to spend the summer.

In 1912 Austin & Sedgwick and Austin & Lochridge designed many more Swiss chalets and at least one bungalow court in Long Beach. Among these was the demolished Henry Ware house. This \$8,000 Swiss chalet had three Malthoid-roofed gables facing the street, shakes cladding the exterior, cream-colored pressed-brick columns and balustrade on its



Figure 4. Austin & Sedgwick, Snell Flats, 1911.

Photo by Louise Ivers.

wide veranda, and a similarly colored pressed-brick chimney. The *Long Beach Daily Telegram* read, "The exterior appearance of the house will be enhanced by the heavy timber effects."<sup>51</sup> The Ware residence contained ten rooms, including a music room on the first floor. A sleeping porch complemented the four bedrooms upstairs. Screened or unscreened sleeping porches were commonly found in the homes designed by Greene & Greene and other Los Angeles and Pasadena architects of the period. They were indicative of the outdoor life touted in Southern California tourist brochures. The interior of the Henry Ware house had the kinds of details promoted in Gustav Stickley's writings.

The living-room will have a beamed ceiling, there will be a heavy cove frieze in the dining-room and in the music-room will be a plaster panel cove. The





Figure 5. Austin & Sedgwick, Snell Flats, 1911.  
Photo by Louise Ivers.

fireplace will be of tile. The buffet will be about nine feet wide and will be equipped with leaded glass doors and plate glass mirrors back of the plateboards.<sup>52</sup>

There were built-in bookcases, desks, dressers, hat boxes, kitchen cabinets, and an ironing board, in typical Craftsman fashion. In addition, behind the house a garage was constructed, which indicates the growing popularity of the automobile, a feature not mentioned in earlier articles describing Long Beach homes.

The Henry H. Hamilton house of 1912 (figure 6) was built for the president of the Art Stone Company by Austin & Lochridge. Thus, it has an art-stone veranda with tapering columns and stoop railings across the front, a smaller art-stone porch on the side, and a foundation of this same mate-





*Figure 6 (above). Austin & Lochridge, Henry H. Hamilton House, 1912.*

*Figure 7 (below). Austin & Lochridge, Harry L. Harrison House, 1912-13.*

*Photos by Louise Ivers.*





Figure 8. Austin & Lochridge, H. L. Harrison Residence.  
From F. Jay Gardon, *Architectural Work of Austin and Lochridge*, 1913.  
Courtesy of the Long Beach Collection, Long Beach Public Library.

rial. The chimney and projecting central "ridge-pole" end in the façade gable are also cast stone. This one-story shake-clad residence was referred to in an advertisement for Austin's office as a bungalow. It is an ideal example of what *The Craftsman* magazine referred to as a "California bungalow."

Built around 1912 or 1913, the larger Harry L. Harrison house (figure 7) has a plastered first story contrasting with the redwood shakes on the second and third stories. Designed by Austin & Lochridge, it has a glassed-in front porch composed of french "windows," the term commonly used in 1912 for what we call french doors today. The foundation has a veneer of red brick, and originally there was another band of this material visually dividing the plaster and shakes on the façade. Exterior tile inlays have also disappeared. "This house was the first in Long Beach to use the 'thatched roof,'" according to the *Long Beach Daily Telegram*.<sup>53</sup> This may have been the influence of traditional English or Japanese farmhouse roofs, but the Harrison "thatch" was of composition material.

The interior contained built-ins constructed of various woods and the dining room (figure 8) had a buffet flanked by pilasters, a beamed ceiling,



and an "art glass" (referred to today as stained glass) window. The Harrison house was more luxurious inside than those discussed above and had provisions for servants, and it adhered to Craftsman precepts with its exposed structural elements and natural colors and textures of wood.

The demolished Horsch apartment building of 1912–1913 was described as a "bungalow court" in the *Daily Telegram*. Designed by Austin & Lochridge, the ten five-room flats flanked a courtyard with "grass plots and flowers"<sup>54</sup> and had "thatched" roofs like those of the Harrison residence. These roofs were undoubtedly meant to mimic the look of rural cottages.

Although they began to design more large commissions in 1912 and 1913, Austin & Lochridge continued to construct Swiss chalets and bungalow courts. The Gilbert Campbell house of 1912–1913 is a two-story chalet with gables supported by knee-braces, a wide art-stone porch and side chimney, and a second-story balcony of wooden slats in typical Swiss fashion. The verge board in the gable has alternating wide and narrow slats. On the side of the Campbell house (figure 9) are two projecting notched beams supported by curved brackets below the grouped windows of both stories. The shapes of the notched ends are reminiscent of the ornamental brackets on Japanese temples and also of carved beam ends on Greene & Greene houses in Pasadena. The house originally had a Malthoid roof and exterior siding of shingles and shakes. In the living room was a fireplace of "mottled" bricks.<sup>55</sup>

In the year the Great War began in Europe, W. Horace Austin's commissions for houses were generally for smaller structures. The M. C. Nelson house of 1914 (figure 10) was described in the *Daily Telegram* as an "aeroplane Swiss chalet."<sup>56</sup> The first story contains four rooms, while the smaller second story has two bedrooms and a bathroom. The "aeroplane" effect is characterized by the second-story "cockpit" set back from the first-story "wings." The front porch has art-stone columns and the low-pitched gables are supported by paired brackets, an Austin trademark of the years between 1915 and 1919. An art-glass window is placed on one side of the house. "Aeroplane" bungalows were not as common as the one-story variety, but a fair amount were built in Long Beach.

Another small home built circa 1914 by Austin was for Joseph C. Douglass (figure 11). This single-story bungalow has plastered porch columns, a chimney, and an unusual pattern of vertical slats with cutouts in the





Figure 9 (above). Austin & Lochridge, Gilbert Campbell House, 1912-13.

Figure 10 (below). W. Horace Austin, M. C. Nelson House, 1914.

*Photos by Louise Ivers.*





Figure 11. W. Horace Austin, Joseph C. Douglass House, 1914.  
*Photo by Louise Ivers.*

verge board. It is an unpretentious six-room bungalow with wide eaves and exposed rafters. This kind of house was built in great numbers singly and in tracts in Long Beach and other parts of Southern California.

Harry W. Metcalf designed bungalows in 1911 and perhaps earlier, but these have all been demolished. He also constructed the Bungalow Apartments in 1911-12, which were demolished as well. Although Gustav Stickley advocated a rural setting for his Craftsman homes, the Bungalow Apartments were on the second floor of a brick building in the commercial area of Long Beach. The post office was downstairs. However, the seventeen apartments were "arranged artistically around a beautiful pergola or court, adorned with flowers and vines"<sup>57</sup> and had individual entrances. The slatted roof of the pergola shaded the "court" but left it open to the sky. Thus, the architect attempted to create an effect of nature in spite of the fact that the apartments were not on the ground floor.





Figure 12. Metcalf & Davies, Mrs. E. E. Macbeth House, 1912–13.

*Photo by Louise Ivers.*

Between 1912 and 1913, Metcalf & Davies built a Swiss chalet for Mrs. E. E. Macbeth (figure 12). Although the front porch with built-in concrete seats has been removed and the house has been converted into apartments, much of its original aspect is still visible. Clad in brown-stained shakes, it had "a porch opening off the dining room in the north side of the house to be used as an outdoor dining room."<sup>58</sup> The glassed-in porch was separated from the indoor dining room by a row of french doors that allowed a great deal of light to come in. The extant groups of four windows on the second story also followed Stickley's concept that a home should be light and airy. The Macbeth house brought the outdoors inside in a manner that Stickley would have liked.

The living room and dining room of Mrs. Macbeth's residence had "rotary oak veneer wainscoting"<sup>59</sup> and oak floors. In the former room were a ten-foot-wide fireplace with a copper hood, built-in desk, bookcases, and a music cabinet with art-glass doors. A buffet with leaded and art-



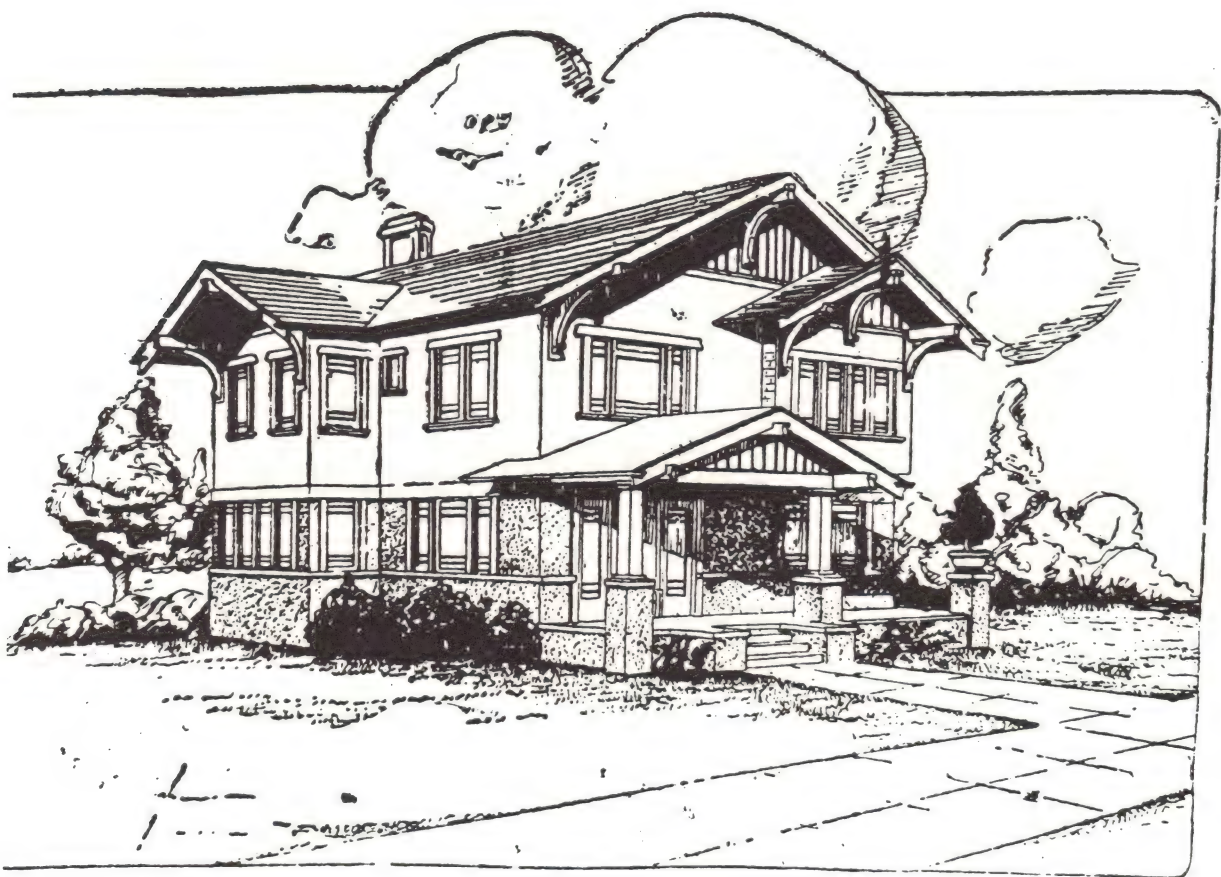


Figure 13. Metcalf & Davies, F. C. Roberts Residence.  
Long Beach Daily Telegram, November 16, 1914.

glass doors was built into the dining room, which also had a plate rail going all the way around it at the level of the door lintels, an influence from either Japanese interiors or Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie houses, which were themselves modeled after Japanese architecture. Hugh Davies' exposure to Arts and Crafts aesthetics at Throop Institute was evident in the Macbeth home.

Metcalf & Davies often combined materials on the exteriors of their Swiss chalets. An example of this type of construction could be seen in the demolished Frank Roberts house of 1913 (figure 13). The first story was concrete, while the second was covered with shingles. French windows in the dining room opened onto a pergola, and a planter urn was placed on the stoop. Knee-braces supported the overhanging eaves, and windows were placed in groups like those of the Macbeth house. The vertical slats in the verge boards and wide eaves were characteristic of the Swiss chalet style.

The Japanese influence could really be seen in Mrs. Helen Harriman's home by Metcalf & Davies built circa 1912-13 (figure 14). This since-demolished house had convex curved gable ends supported by complex curved brackets like those in ancient Japanese temples. A second-story balcony had upward curved railings and brackets similar to those beneath the roofs. These elaborate details demonstrate that Metcalf and Davies were familiar with Japanese architecture. Since Davies was originally from St. Louis, he, like Charles Greene, might have gone to see the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in 1904. In 1912, the year Davies became Metcalf's partner, he took a steamship voyage to San Francisco where he could have seen Asian-influenced buildings, or he may have seen Japanese gardens in Los Angeles.

In 1914, Metcalf & Davies constructed a \$9,000 residence for Dr. M. B. Huff (figure 15). The foundation was clad in "ruffled brick," the first story in shakes, the second story in white cement plaster, and the "thatched roof" was green. The *Daily Telegram* referred to the house as "A Typical California Home,"<sup>60</sup> and it had the characteristic projecting, bracketed eaves, vertical slats in the gables, and grouped windows of the Craftsman style. The first floor interior had oak paneling and exposed ceiling beams. In the living room was a green tile fireplace with built-in bookcases along the entire west wall. Beneath these bookcases and in the dining room were green tile wainscots. Blue tile was placed on the white



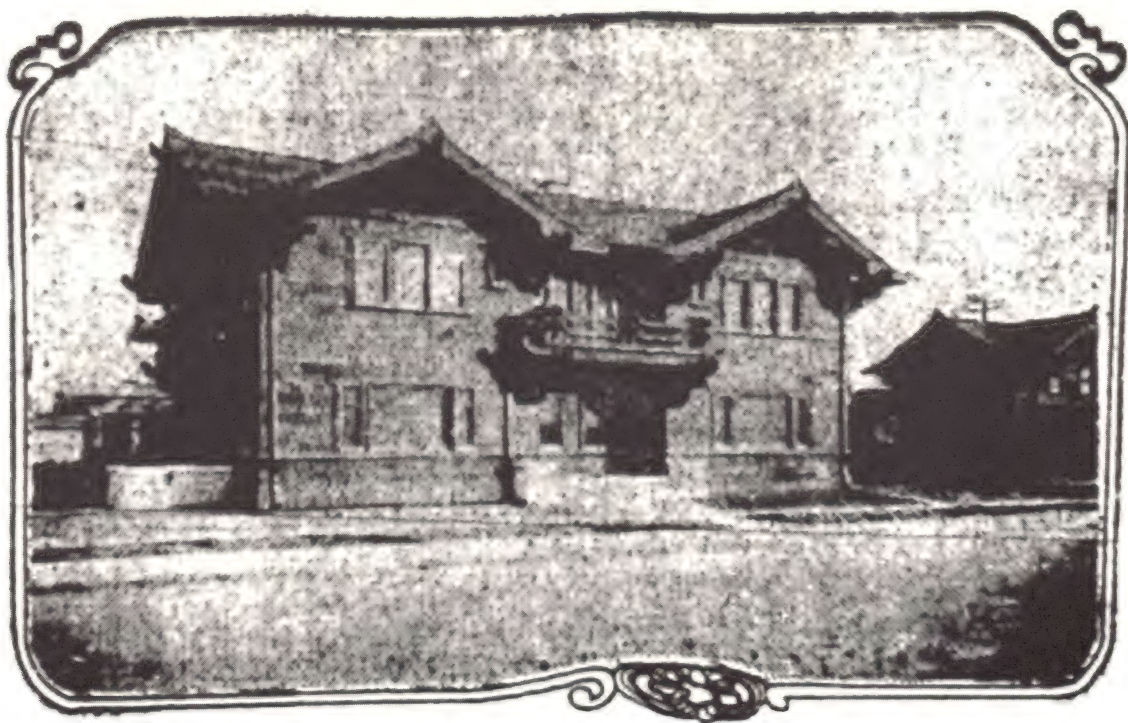


Figure 14. Metcalf & Davies, Mrs. Helen Harriman's Home of Japanese Architecture.  
Long Beach Daily Telegram, October 31, 1913.

enameled breakfast-room buffet. French windows divided the living room from the breakfast room so their space could merge together, typical of the Craftsman open plan. Like the Roberts house, the Huff residence displayed a variety of materials. Stickley wrote in *The Craftsman* about the use of harmonious colors and materials, and these kinds of combinations were seen in Dr. Huff's house.

The E. W. Clemmer house of 1914 by Metcalf & Davies had a unique exterior. The second story was described as a glass pergola in the *Daily Telegram*: "French windows will open to the main deck of the roof, which will be ornamented with ferns and vines and serve as a promenade and resting place. The two rooms in the pergola will be enclosed by glass, excepting the posts."<sup>61</sup> The architects attempted to bring nature into the

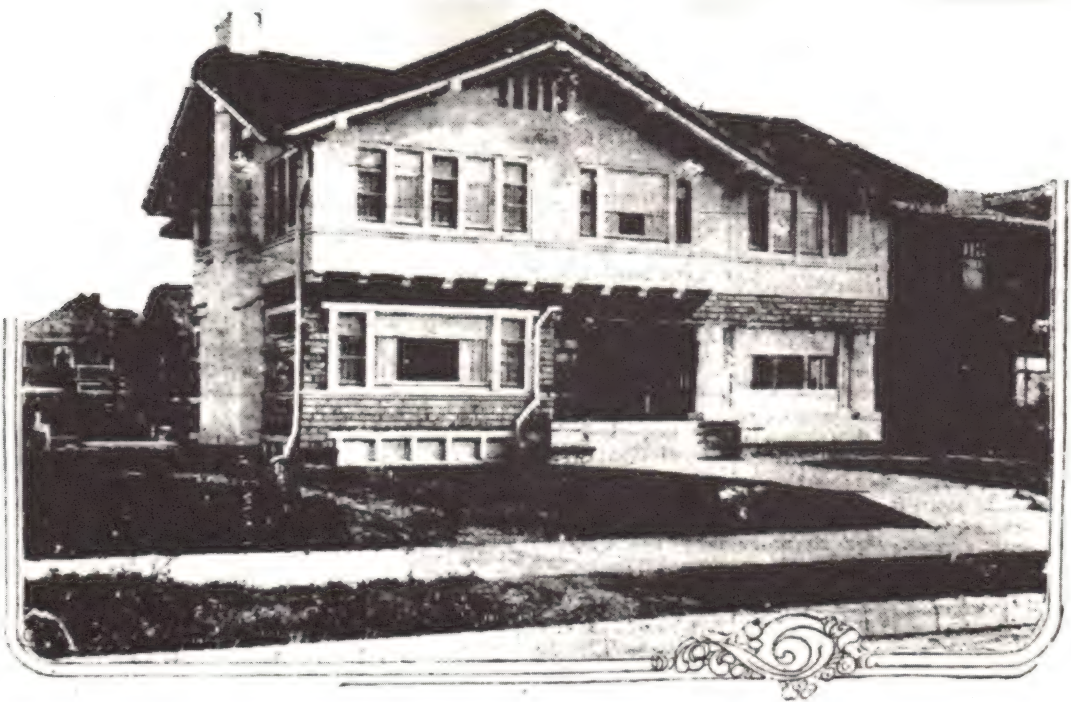


Figure 15. Metcalf & Davies, Dr. M. B. Huff Home.  
Long Beach Daily Telegram, November 18, 1915.

home by opening it up with a wall of windows. Articles in *The Craftsman* advocated the use of french doors to create an unbroken view of the landscape and connect the house with its garden. In the Clemmer residence the garden was part of the upper story.

The Swiss chalets designed by W. Horace Austin, Westel W. Sedgwick, Harvey H. Lochridge, Harry W. Metcalf, and Hugh R. Davies were typical of those constructed in Southern California during the years preceding America's entry into World War I. In an illustrated article published in 1915 in *The Craftsman*, Elizabeth G. Graham characterized the Swiss chalets reproduced there as having "charm, quaintness and picturesqueness."<sup>62</sup> Those in Long Beach, like the ones in Pasadena and Los Angeles, had picturesque, asymmetrical compositions, visually varied



arrangements of architectural elements and textures of materials, and casual yet sophisticated designs. They were usually related to the surrounding landscape (even the Bungalow Apartments were planned with pergolas and planter boxes). Graham's description of the Swiss chalets pictured in her article can be applied to ones by Austin & Sedgwick or Metcalf & Davies:

[The chalet] furnishes opportunity for outdoor living without a sense of manipulating the construction to suit this modern fad, so often felt in country architecture. The long roof lines of the Swiss chalet, the projecting timbers, all give opportunities for deep porches, for open-air sleeping rooms, for outdoor dining spots, to be found in few other types of modern buildings, except some of the Japanese houses of the remote interior.<sup>63</sup>

Although they were influenced by Swiss and Japanese architecture, the Long Beach bungalows were uniquely Californian for exactly the reasons Graham stated in her article. They were peculiarly suited to the mild and sunny Southern California climate with their large amounts of windows or french doors, verandas spreading across their façades, screened sleeping porches and dining rooms, and wide bracketed eaves that kept them cool in the summer time. Most of the Long Beach chalets were faced with hand-split redwood or cedar shakes, had exposed structural elements such as rafters or ceiling beams, large fireplaces and chimneys that gave homey comfort to their inhabitants, and were constructed of natural materials that suggested a luxurious simplicity to the viewer. Even the apartment courts afforded more pleasurable surroundings to renters than the usual units entered from long indoor corridors. The smallest bungalow apartments as well as the largest three-story chalets had built-in furniture and living and dining rooms whose space merged together in an open plan.

The architects who designed bungalows or "Swiss chalets" in Long Beach tried to make them as comfortable and convenient as possible for their inhabitants. Even the bigger homes were built for informal living. The Victorian front and back parlors were, in fact, replaced in the bungalows by "living rooms." Life in California in 1912 was more casual than in the late nineteenth century, even for the wealthier patrons who commissioned Austin & Sedgwick and Metcalf & Davies to design their houses. The bungalows and Swiss chalets of Long Beach were constructed either near the ocean or in suburban areas where outdoor activities were common.

The homes designed by the Long Beach architects included excellent examples of the Swiss chalet type. Both their exterior and interior details revealed a level of craftsmanship and use of construction materials rarely available today. The extensive amount of wood in these houses gave them a warm and comfortable aspect not found in the heavily ornamented palaces that were popular on the east coast. Although many Long Beach Swiss chalets and bungalows have been demolished, the ones that survive are wonderful homes for those who are lucky enough to live in them.

## NOTES

*Author's Note:* A new publication about Long Beach architecture by Cara Mullio and Jennifer Volland, *Long Beach—The Unexpected Metropolis* (Santa Monica, CA: Hennessey and Ingalls, 2005), contains a number of photographs but no new research about architects or buildings in Long Beach.

<sup>1</sup> In the *Long Beach Daily Telegram* articles from 1911 to 1914, bungalows are referred to as "Swiss chalets."

<sup>2</sup> *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, July 27, 1905, 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, July 21, 1905, 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, November 15, 1905, 1.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, September 2, 1907, 1.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, November 21, 1907, 1.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, January 3, 1910, 7.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, June 29, 1911, 6.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, October 31, 1913, III-14.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, June 29, 1914, 9.

<sup>13</sup> Robert Winter and Alexander Vertikoff, *American Bungalow Style* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 32.

<sup>14</sup> Randall L. Makinson, *Greene & Greene, The Passion and the Legacy* (Salt Lake City, UT: Gibbs Smith, 1988), 5.

<sup>15</sup> Randall L. Makinson, "Charles and Henry Greene," *Toward a Simpler Way of Life*, ed. Robert Winter (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997), 125.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 124.

<sup>17</sup> John Wesley Hanson, *The Official History of the Fair, St. Louis, 1904* (St. Louis, 1904), 367-68.

<sup>18</sup> Gustav Stickley, "Craftsman Homes," *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, July 16, 1910, 7.

<sup>19</sup> John Crosby Freeman, *The Forgotten Rebel, Gustav Stickley and His Craftsman Mission Furniture* (Watkins Glen, NY: Century House, 1966), 80.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 74.

<sup>21</sup> Wendell G. Corthell, "The Use of Wood in Switzerland," *The Craftsman* 5 (October 1903): 39.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>23</sup> Gustav Stickley, "Craftsman Homes," *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, September 30, 1910, 10.

<sup>24</sup> Gustav Stickley, "Craftsman Homes," *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, May 12, 1910, 3.

<sup>25</sup> Gustav Stickley, "Craftsman Homes," *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, July 16, 1910, 7.

<sup>26</sup> Gustav Stickley, "Craftsman Homes," *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, September 3, 1910, 3.

<sup>27</sup> Gustav Stickley, "Craftsman Homes," *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, October 1, 1910, 2.

<sup>28</sup> "Ebell Club House to Be Opened Today," *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, July 24, 1905, 5.

<sup>29</sup> "Unique Dwelling of Architect Benton," *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, September 12, 1907, 3.

<sup>30</sup> "Long Beach, The Ideal Home City," *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, November 16, 1914, IV-1.



- <sup>31</sup> Walter H. Case, *History of Long Beach* (Long Beach, CA: The Press-Telegram Publishing Company, 1935), 2:233.
- <sup>32</sup> *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, February 20, 1905, 7.
- <sup>33</sup> "Fine Record of Architects," *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, March 4, 1912, 2.
- <sup>34</sup> *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, November 16, 1914, IV-4.
- <sup>35</sup> "Architects Chapter Elects Officers," *Southwest Builder and Contractor*, December 17, 1920, 11.
- <sup>36</sup> *Long Beach Press-Telegram*, March 7, 1925, 12.
- <sup>37</sup> "Architect W. Horace Austin of Long Beach Passes Away," *Southwest Builder and Contractor*, July 17, 1942, 38.
- <sup>38</sup> *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, August 27, 1907, 1.
- <sup>39</sup> "Metcalf Has Partner Now," *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, September 30, 1912, 6.
- <sup>40</sup> Walter H. Case, *History of Long Beach and Vicinity* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1927), 2:356-57.
- <sup>41</sup> Barry Sanders, *Gustav Stickley and the Craftsman Movement* (New York: Preservation Press, 1996), xiv.
- <sup>42</sup> "Symphony Support Pledge Is Given by Civic Leaders," *The Sun*, February 6, 1931.
- <sup>43</sup> "Who's Who in Long Beach," *The Sun*, 1931.
- <sup>44</sup> "Hugh R. Davies Dies Here at 83," *Independent-Press-Telegram*, December 24, 1967.
- <sup>45</sup> "Contract Is Awarded for Virginia Country Club House Which Is to Be Completed in 30 Days," *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, February 11, 1910, 1.
- <sup>46</sup> *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, November 13, 1911, 6.
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, July 10, 1911, 7.
- <sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, August 17, 1911, 7.
- <sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, January 15, 1912, 4.
- <sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, June 27, 1912, 6.
- <sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, November 16, 1914, section IV, 2.
- <sup>54</sup> "One-Story Building With Ten Five-Room Suites and High, English Roof," *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, October 31, 1912, 6.
- <sup>55</sup> "Pretty Home on the East First," *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, January 13, 1913, 4.
- <sup>56</sup> "Attractive New Dwelling Will Be Built for M. C. Nelson on Olive Avenue," *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, November 23, 1914, 3.
- <sup>57</sup> "A View of the Court," *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, April 25, 1912, 9.
- <sup>58</sup> "New Home for Molino Avenue," *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, September 30, 1912, 6.
- <sup>59</sup> "New Dwelling Is Occupied," *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, March 20, 1913, 8.
- <sup>60</sup> "Huff Residence Almost Finished," *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, December 14, 1914, 2.
- <sup>61</sup> "A Very Unique Home Planned by Metcalf & Davies for Coronado St.," *Long Beach Daily Telegram*, 23 July 1914, 2.
- <sup>62</sup> Elizabeth G. Graham, "The Swiss Chalet: Its Influence on American Home Architecture," *The Craftsman* 28 (May 1915), 222.
- <sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

# THE SWING OF THE POLITICAL PENDULUM

Congressman John Moss,  
the Democratic Party,  
and the United Farm Workers'  
Grape Strike and Boycott,

1965–1970

*By Todd Holmes*

On September 16, 1965, César Chávez and the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA) inaugurated what would become the most successful and ambitious agricultural movement in United States history.<sup>1</sup> Starting in the small farming town of Delano, Chávez's ambitious grape strike and boycott pulled farm workers together into a solidified group for the first time, spurring a movement that would transcend the boundaries of Delano and California and expose the plight of the workers in both the national and international arenas. Though technically based on a dispute over wages and working conditions, the strike soon personified the struggle for civil rights that raged throughout the nation, with the farm workers battling to end the exploitive economic conditions imposed on them since the beginning of specialized, large production agriculture in California. Thousands of workers readily sacrificed themselves and their families for the cause; for them, the farm workers' movement was "the last ditch fight of a feudalistic way of life, which in other industries disappeared long ago."<sup>2</sup> Under Chávez's innovative and unrelenting leadership, the





Figure 1. Congressman John E. Moss.  
*John E. Moss papers. Department of  
Special Collections and University  
Archives. The Library. California  
State University, Sacramento.*

NFWA broke down the century-old system of agricultural exploitation as never before, bringing the unrecognized and invisible farm worker to the forefront of society while enabling *La Causa* (the cause) to radically shift the balance of power between agribusiness and the union farm workers.<sup>3</sup>

As the farm workers' movement began, a Democratic congressman from California named John Emerson Moss (see figure 1) prepared to enter his thirteenth year as a representative of California's Third Congressional District. Sacramento County, which comprised most of his district, was a predominately rural area, containing over two thousand small- and medium-sized farms, as well as a large Democratic plurality.<sup>4</sup> Moss, who described himself as a "really liberal Democrat," had first been elected to the United States Congress in 1952 and soon had emerged as a giant in the California congressional delegation, "working in a bipartisan fashion to protect the interests of the state and particularly the Central Valley."<sup>5</sup> In his twenty-six-year career, the congressman earned the reputation of

being a "legislator's legislator—incorruptible, extremely hard working, compassionate, and always fighting for the people's interests."<sup>6</sup> He served as chairman of the Foreign Operations and Government Information Subcommittee as well as the Commerce and Finance Subcommittee and worked as deputy majority whip in the House of Representatives from 1961 until his retirement in 1978.<sup>7</sup>

The early life of the congressman provides invaluable insight into both his character and the politics he practiced during his long career. Moss, who was born in Hiawatha, Utah, in 1913, moved to Sacramento with his family at the age of eight because of a worsening asthmatic condition. Forced to live with his mother's family after suffering the dual tragedies of her death in 1925 and abandonment by his father, Moss soon developed a personality of strong and sometimes stubborn independence—a disposition that would largely influence and characterize his political career. The young Sacramentan entered politics in 1938, becoming a member of both the California Youth Democrats and the Sacramento County Democrat Central Committee.<sup>8</sup> Ten years later, Moss waged his first campaign against those he deemed "least worthy of representing Sacramento" and was elected to the California State Assembly for two terms before his 1952 journey to Washington.<sup>9</sup>

Displaying the strong independence that characterized his youth, Moss came to be known as a political maverick in Congress, doing things his way and often incurring the wrath of both Republicans and fellow Democrats. In the 1960s, for instance, he publicly denounced high-standing Democrats in the Department of the Interior for accepting gifts during water-rights negotiations,<sup>10</sup> distinguished himself as one of the few politicians to fight government secrecy,<sup>11</sup> and challenged congressional rules by refusing to accept the "doctrinal powers of senior congressmen."<sup>12</sup> Though bold and controversial at times, reform-minded Moss authored the Freedom of Information Act, created the Consumer Product Safety Commission, voted against the escalation of the Vietnam War,<sup>13</sup> and played a pivotal role as majority whip in the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Bill.<sup>14</sup> Upon leaving Washington in 1978, Moss summed up his political character by stating, "Too many people want to be popular around here. I don't really give a damn. If it's the right vote, it will become popular."<sup>15</sup>

John Moss prided himself as the representative of the working man, an obstinate advocate of civil rights, and an unwavering presence in Washington. In reminiscing on his career in a 1989 oral interview, Moss fostered



this image of the courageous, independent-minded politician, stating, "I was never a conformist. If I felt someone was wrong or a damn fool, I was not averse to expressing myself. . . . I never ducked controversy; I embraced controversy."<sup>16</sup> Yet this self-characterization does not correctly portray John Moss during the farm workers' strike and boycott of California grapes from 1965 to 1970. Indeed, the agricultural labor movement would have welcomed a bold advocate of the working man, someone who had the courage to challenge the powerful forces of agribusiness in California. From the point of view of the farm workers, however, Moss did not prove to be a strong ally. Rather, the congressman's position served as a vivid illustration of the stranglehold agribusiness had on both California and national politics, with its influence spanning both ends of the political spectrum, from conservative Republicans to liberal Democrats.<sup>17</sup> Moss's position on the movement was one of silence for the first three years, offering no support to the farm workers until November 1968. Though Moss later claimed that he always supported the union morally, his three years of silence illuminated his close ties with California agribusiness—political ties that were not severed by either Moss or the Democratic Party organization until the 1968 swing of the political pendulum.

The powerful political influence of California agribusiness, as well as the exploited and economically deprived state of farm workers, stem mainly from the historical development of agriculture in the Golden State. Since the gold rush era, capitalist development and economic expansion have been the centerpieces of California's economy, especially in the realm of agriculture. Concentrated land ownership, factory-like farm production, and a vast surplus of low-cost Chinese labor dating back to the end of railroad construction in the 1870s, combined with a climate and soil unmatched anywhere else in the nation to create almost unimaginable agricultural output and profits. By 1900, the growth of specialty-crop agriculture such as fresh fruits, vegetables, nuts, sugar beets, and even cotton had emerged in the Central Valley, all contained on vast centralized estates.<sup>18</sup> Yet in this system of mass production and high profits, exploited migratory labor came to assume as dominant a role in California as slavery had in the Old South—a "peculiar institution" that proved to be greatly advantageous for the grower and devastating for the worker.<sup>19</sup> (See figure 2.)

As the decades went on, a succession of different ethnic groups were assigned the economic role of farm workers, starting with Native Americans, the Chinese, the Japanese, and then followed by the Mexicans and

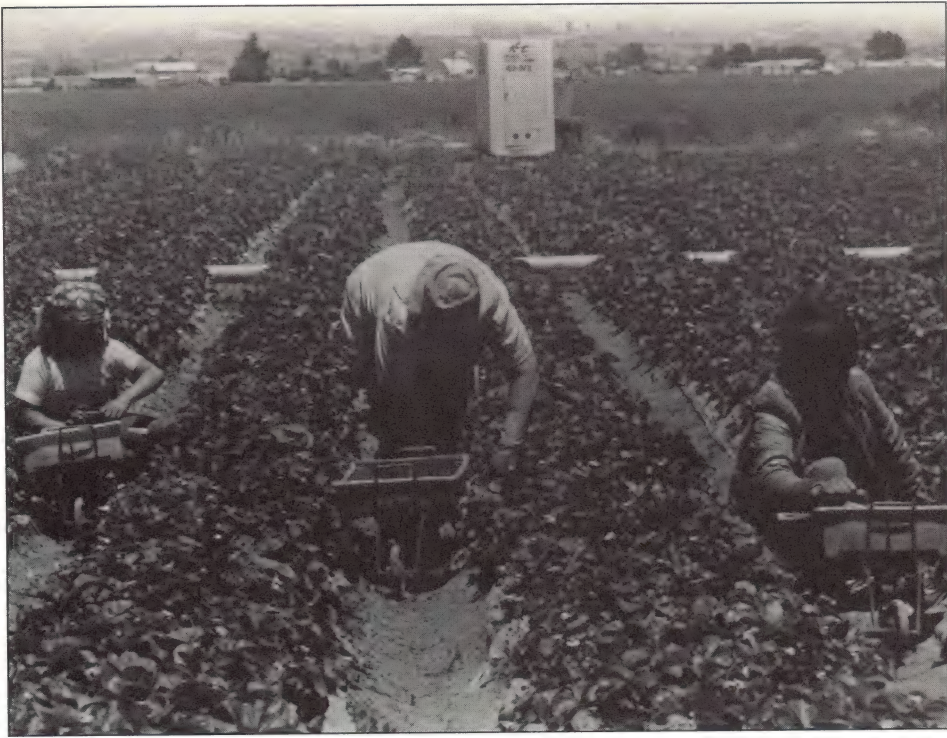


Figure 2. Farm workers and children harvesting strawberries in California, c. 1970.  
*United Farm Worker Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University.*

Filipinos who made up the majority of the work force after the end of the Great Depression.<sup>20</sup> The capitalistic foundation of California agriculture established wages based entirely on ensuring high profits for the growers, with general disregard for the living conditions and lives of the workers. Even the New Deal measures of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, which were intended to bring hope and equality to the American worker, neglected these largely foreign-born laborers in California's largest industry. The political power and influence of agribusiness allowed it exemption from standards applied to other industries, such as the 1934 Wagner Act, the 1935 Social Security Act, and the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act. Because of these exemptions, the gap between farm workers and blue-collar industrial workers grew particularly large, with most segments of the agricultural labor force losing ground in the proceeding twenty-five years



in comparison to their urban counterparts.<sup>21</sup> César Chávez linked the poverty-level wages, lack of meaningful job security, and poor working conditions experienced by farm laborers to agribusinesses' power and the agricultural industry's exemptions from New Deal reforms. Chávez noted bluntly that Roosevelt's labor reforms "did not save the farm worker. He was left out of every one of them. The social revolution of the New Deal passed him by."<sup>22</sup>

Preparation for U.S. involvement in World War II drained off the vast surplus of labor the California growers had enjoyed throughout the 1930s, with many of the Dust Bowlers and ethnic minorities called into service in wartime industries or directly as soldiers in the war itself. A perceived and actual labor shortage forced agribusiness to again assert its political influence and power, demanding a flexible immigration system that would provide whatever supply of cheap labor it needed. Consequently, in 1941, the United States and Mexico finalized negotiations on the *Bracero* Program, which would provide growers and the railroad industry with cheap, controllable labor that would disappear in the off-season. Though only intended to last for the duration of the war, the growers lobbied successfully to extend the program past the December 1945 expiration date and then, in 1951, got Congress to continue it under the direction of the Department of Labor with the passage of Public Law 78.<sup>23</sup>

Public Law 78, though highly beneficial to growers, had devastating effects on domestic farm workers such as Chávez and many others who were veterans of World War II or the Korean conflict. The skyrocketing use of braceros continued to depress wages in agriculture and forced many domestic farm laborers who were unable to compete with imported workers to look for employment elsewhere. Indeed, braceros received preferential status in hiring by growers.<sup>24</sup> The law also strengthened the control of growers, who used the program to prevent or undercut labor organization and avert strikes. Agribusiness kept wages low, and by 1959 farm-labor earnings lagged behind those in the manufacturing sector by 46.6 percent.<sup>25</sup> Such abuses of the guest labor program and the deplorable working conditions it created caused Lee G. Williams, who supervised bracero employment in the Department of Labor from 1959 to 1964, to refer to the system as "legalized slavery."<sup>26</sup> The binational program finally ended in January 1965, only to be replaced with another grower-influenced system titled Public Law 414. Because the law imposed more stringent requirements on the growers who received braceros, California agribusiness again used its political clout

to have money cut from the Border Patrol, thus ensuring illegal immigration into the Golden State.<sup>27</sup> Despite the abolition of the Bracero Program, Chávez remained less than sanguine about the establishment of an equitable work environment. Rather, as he noted, internecine competition between domestic workers and foreign labor would persist as long as "the annual parade of thousand of illegals and green carders across the United States-Mexican border to work in our fields" continued. In fact, by the mid-1960s, foreigners comprised over two-thirds of the seasonal labor force.<sup>28</sup>

John Moss's position on the Bracero Program did not reveal a compassionate, independent politician but rather illuminated his thirteen years of loyal support for California agribusiness. By 1961, the U.S. Department of Labor had sent out numerous fact sheets on the devastating effects of Public Law 78, detailing the unfit housing, numbing poverty, and deplorable working conditions that confronted farm workers on a daily basis. Pointing to statistics that showed large growers as the real beneficiaries, with "five percent of the farmers . . . account[ing] for 70 percent of the expenditures for hired labor," Secretary of Labor Arthur J. Goldberg concluded that the "shocking, public policy" had been "directed toward the perpetuation of this system, rather than . . . its elimination."<sup>29</sup> Yet these statements and facts did not sway Moss, who sent numerous requests to the Department of Labor on behalf of growers, such as one for Yolo Growers Inc. dated August 22, 1962, advising that "1500 braceros [were] urgently needed . . . to pick [the] tomato crop."<sup>30</sup>

That same year, Moss and other congressional representatives and California growers met with the Department of Labor to "vigorously protest the Department's . . . limitation on the use of bracero labor," pointing out "that growers, who play an important role in Sacramento Valley agriculture, [would] be penalized."<sup>31</sup> With the Bracero Program increasingly coming under attack in the early sixties, Moss went to great lengths to endorse Public Law 78, setting up a meeting with the Agricultural Council of California and other top representatives of California's agribusiness to "discuss frankly some of the farm labor problems facing Congress and . . . California agriculture."<sup>32</sup> The congressman also delivered a speech to the Sacramento County Chamber of Commerce Agribusiness Committee, touting the importance of agriculture and discussing the problems facing the Bracero Program, admitting that the "California delegation [would] be hard pressed to convince a continuation of the program."<sup>33</sup>



Considering the waning role of agriculture in Moss's Sacramento County District, his support for Public Law 78 seemed based more on catering to the traditional Democratic stronghold of growers who had flourished from the munificent crop payments bestowed on them since FDR's New Deal than on his emerging urban and suburban constituency. Although the number of farms in Sacramento County surpassed those in any other San Joaquin Valley county by almost three hundred, the farm estates in the lower Central Valley averaged well over five times larger than those in Sacramento.<sup>34</sup> In this light, Moss's endorsement and advocacy of Public Law 78 demonstrated a conditional political response to the demands of California agribusiness rather than an acknowledgement of the realities of Sacramento County agriculture, whose limited need for bracero labor paled in comparison to its southern counterparts.

When Congress abolished Public Law 78 in 1964, extending its expiration date in California until January 1965, Moss's support for agribusiness focused on fighting the stringent requirements of the program's successor, Public Law 414. With petitions for braceros going through a more critical review process, requiring growers to demonstrate both their efforts to attract domestic labor and the existence of a dire labor shortage, the new law threatened to severely limit the mass influx of foreign workers that had long benefited agribusiness. In a conciliatory letter to an anxious California Bean Growers Association, the congressman reassured the group of his commitment to the growers of the Golden State: "In the past, as you no doubt know, I have vigorously supported every effort to extend the now expired Public Law 78 and . . . am going to do all within my power to insist that the Secretary of Labor certify and use Public Law 414."<sup>35</sup> With the Department of Labor enforcing the policies of the new program more stringently than its predecessor, Moss enlisted the support of powerful corporations who had both ties and financial interests in California agribusiness.

In a 1964 speech to executives of Bank of America, the congressman addressed an issue he characterized as "of major importance to California." He stated that he remained hopeful that the bracero program was not dead because there was "a need for it."<sup>36</sup> The Bank of America, created by A. P. Giannini in 1904 and originally called the Bank of Italy, provided financing to industries in California, such as agriculture, that struggled to receive funding from the East. By 1964, Bank of America controlled almost half of all branch banking in the state and had extensive ties to and investments with California agribusiness.<sup>37</sup> The leviathan bank, the largest in the world,

responded to the congressman's appeal: its agricultural vice president, Earl Coke, sent a statement to Washington that the bank was "concerned over the farm labor situation because agribusiness [was] the most important single industry in California."<sup>38</sup> As corporations such as Bank of America applied what pressure they could, Moss continued his activism on behalf of California agriculture, battling "pointedly and, on occasions, rather heatedly"<sup>39</sup> with the new Secretary of Labor, W. Willard Wirtz, who continually demanded that the "agricultural industry improve its housing and working conditions, and raise its wages . . . to find the workers it needs."<sup>40</sup>

Though *bracero* labor still entered the fields of California in 1965, their numbers were significantly less with the more stringent requirements of Public Law 414, which provided domestic farm workers with the first opportunity to demand better pay and working conditions. Yet the reduction of the international program did not eliminate discontent from the ranks of California farm laborers. On September 8, 1965, the largely Filipino-based Agricultural Workers Organizational Committee (AWOC) called a strike in nine Delano grape vineyards after growers rejected its demand for an hourly wage increase from \$1.20 to \$1.40, which was the rate paid to *braceros*. Eight days later, César Chávez and the NFWA voted to join their fellow workers in the strike and thus risk everything that the union and its leader had worked to develop during its three-year existence.<sup>41</sup> However, Chávez realized that it would take more than a few thousand protesting farm workers to wage a successful battle against California's largest and most powerful industry. With demands for reform sweeping the nation, Chávez tapped into the fervor and resources of various social movements, thus ideologically linking the plight of farm workers to the non-violent civil rights struggle.<sup>42</sup> Chávez traveled to churches and universities throughout the state informing audiences about the strike, encouraging clergy, students, and activists of the free speech and civil rights movements to join him in Delano to assist the striking farm workers.<sup>43</sup> By 1965, the civil rights movement had laid important ground work in legitimizing the grievances of ethnic minorities, and with the aid of activist groups such as the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), Chávez and the striking farm workers enjoyed a grass-roots support that created a glimmering prospect of a successful strike.<sup>44</sup> (See figure 3.)

As farm workers organized picket lines, the union decided to aim the strike primarily at Schenley Industries and the DiGiorgio Fruit Corpora-



# Support Farm Workers'

The Schenley Company in San Francisco owns the Schenley Ranch in Delano, California. This ranch is one of 35 San Joaquin Valley now being struck by farmworkers of the Farm Workers Association and the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AFL-CIO).

They are demanding \$1.40 minimum wage.

This is a bitter strike, the largest agricultural strike since the 1930's.

The response of the growers has been brutality, harassment, and blanket refusal to negotiate. On the Schenley Ranch the grower used high-speed tractors to cover the striking workers with a thick cloud of choking dust.

COME TO SECOND AND MARKET STREETS AT 3pm  
OCTOBER 12

Wear a purple armband. If you can, bring grapes..

Sponsored by:

Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee  
Student Committee on Agricultural Labor  
Citizens for Farm Labor  
Centro Social Obrero  
Berkeley CORE

(These groups have been asked by the Farm Workers Association to picket the Schenley Company to demand that Schenley negotiate with the representatives of the striking workers)

labor donated

# STRIKE!

## Picket the Schenley Company

Figure 3. 1965 Student handout, Sacramento State College campus.  
Association of Students Incorporated, Grape Strike Collection 1965-1966, Series 7, 5:05.  
Special Collections and University Archives, California State University, Sacramento.

tion, two of the world's largest grape growers.<sup>45</sup> Schenley and DiGiorgio embodied California agribusiness, grossing hundreds of millions of dollars each year at the expense of farm laborers who represented the only section of the labor force in the two colossal enterprises that was not unionized.<sup>46</sup> As non-violent protests in the form of picket lines began to swarm the various ranches of the two corporations, picketers pleaded with the imported strikebreakers to join La Causa and support the union. By the fifth day, 90 percent of the normal field workforce had walked off the job, yet the growers quickly filled their positions with braceros and illegal immigrants. By early October, farm workers struck dozens of ranches, with over three thousand laborers leaving the fields to join and support the union.<sup>47</sup> As the growers recruited busloads of strikebreakers, or "scabs," to the vineyards of Delano, Chávez made his first appeal of many to American consumers, announcing a boycott of all the products produced by the Schenley and DiGiorgio corporations.

In addition to the hundreds of student and activist volunteers who came to aid the farm workers, sympathetic unions throughout the Central Valley provided support as well. Railroad men in the Roseville switch yard, for instance, diverted a shipment of "scab-picked" grapes for several days, allowing the fruit to sit and rot before being shipped.<sup>48</sup> On December 16, 1965, Walter Reuther, president of the United Auto Workers Union, arrived in Delano to announce his support for the farm workers. Marching with the workers through the dusty streets of the San Joaquin Valley community (see figure 4), Reuther pledged \$5,000 a month to both the AWOC and NFWA, and, in a declaration of worker solidarity, he told the *huelgistas* (strikers), "[This is] not your strike, but our strike."<sup>49</sup>

As the striking farm workers protested through peaceful picketing, the growers in Delano reacted strongly against the strike. Five days after the strike began, the growers turned off the gas and electricity to the labor camps where the workers and their families lived and used their tractors to cover the picket lines with dust. As the strike continued, the reaction of growers turned from abusive harassment to intimidation and physical violence. Strikers were soon threatened with shotguns and were kicked and punched by angry mobs made up of foreman, security guards, growers, and "loyal" Delano citizens, severely challenging the resolve of the picketers' commitment to non-violence.<sup>50</sup> (See figure 5.) Some growers, such as Bruno and Charles Disputo, raised the level of violence by spraying picket lines with sulfur, threatening strikers with dogs, and even hitting picketer Eugene Nelson with their truck.<sup>51</sup>



The inaction of the police in Delano, who witnessed such brutal reactions by the growers, served as another illustration of the powerful and influential reach of California agribusiness. As the strike's duration stretched from days into weeks, the police moved from being passive spectators to agents of intervention on the side of the growers. On October 17, 1965, law enforcement officials arrested the Reverend David Harens for violating Kern County Sheriff Roy Galyen's directive forbidding strikers from disturbing the peace. The next day, Galyen banned the use of the word *huelga* (strike); this led to the arrest of Chávez and forty-four strikers, whose bail was set at \$276 each.<sup>52</sup> Chávez used the arrests to expose the favoritism agribusiness received from police, who not only quelled peaceful strikes but also allowed the growers, who used illegal immigrants and children as strikebreakers, to blatantly break the law.<sup>53</sup> (See figure 6.) As the actions—and in many cases inaction—of the courts, law enforcement agencies, and government officials continued to favor the growers, the prospect of a successful strike seemed very unlikely.

While Chávez and the strikers waged their peaceful protests, experiencing brutality and hostile police intervention, Moss commenced what would be three years of silence and inactivity regarding the injustices suffered by farm workers. As details of the strike filled newspaper headlines and reports appeared on the evening news, the congressman clearly could not claim to be uninformed of the situation erupting in his home state. One of the many actions taken by student supporters of the Delano strike on campuses across the state, such as Sacramento State College (SSC), involved enlisting state and federal government representatives in support of the strike and boycott. The UFWA provided template letters (see figure 7) to the students along with addresses of elected representatives who should be contacted, which for SSC supporters included Moss.<sup>54</sup> Yet surprisingly, Moss's congressional papers contain not one of these letters, from student supporters or any other activist group, on behalf of the farm workers from these early years. Though one can only speculate why these communications were ignored or disregarded, the fact remains that for one reason or another Moss did not keep such letters. Unawareness or disinterest aside, we might infer that the congressman was silent because the farm workers' struggle did not immediately affect the Sacramento area. Yet brutal responses suffered by supporters of the movement did occur in Moss's home district, with NFWA picketers harassed and beaten by shop owners Dominick and Mario Affinito at Fifty-First and Folsom Boulevard on the evening of July 5, 1966.<sup>55</sup>



Figure 4. (left to right) Larry Itliong of the AWOC, Walter Reuther of the UAW, and César Chávez of the NFWA, marching through the streets of Delano, California, December 1965. *United Auto Workers Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University.*





*Figure 5. Cayetano Esquivel, injured by a foreman when Esquivel went into the fields to talk to scab workers. Coachella, June 1969. United Farm Worker Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University.*

John Moss's silence can be brought into perspective by the legislation he endorsed in 1965 and 1966 that illustrate his unwavering support of California agribusiness. Besides vigorously advocating the use of braceros under Public Law 414, which greatly impeded any success of the farm workers' movement, Moss sponsored legislation creating a national minimum wage. Though on the surface such legislation would appear to be addressing the plight of agricultural laborers in the Golden State, analysis beyond the bill's title reveals that the intended beneficiaries were not farm workers but the growers. Moss frequently referred to the "labor-price squeeze" faced by California growers in defending the use of braceros, stating, "Farm wages in

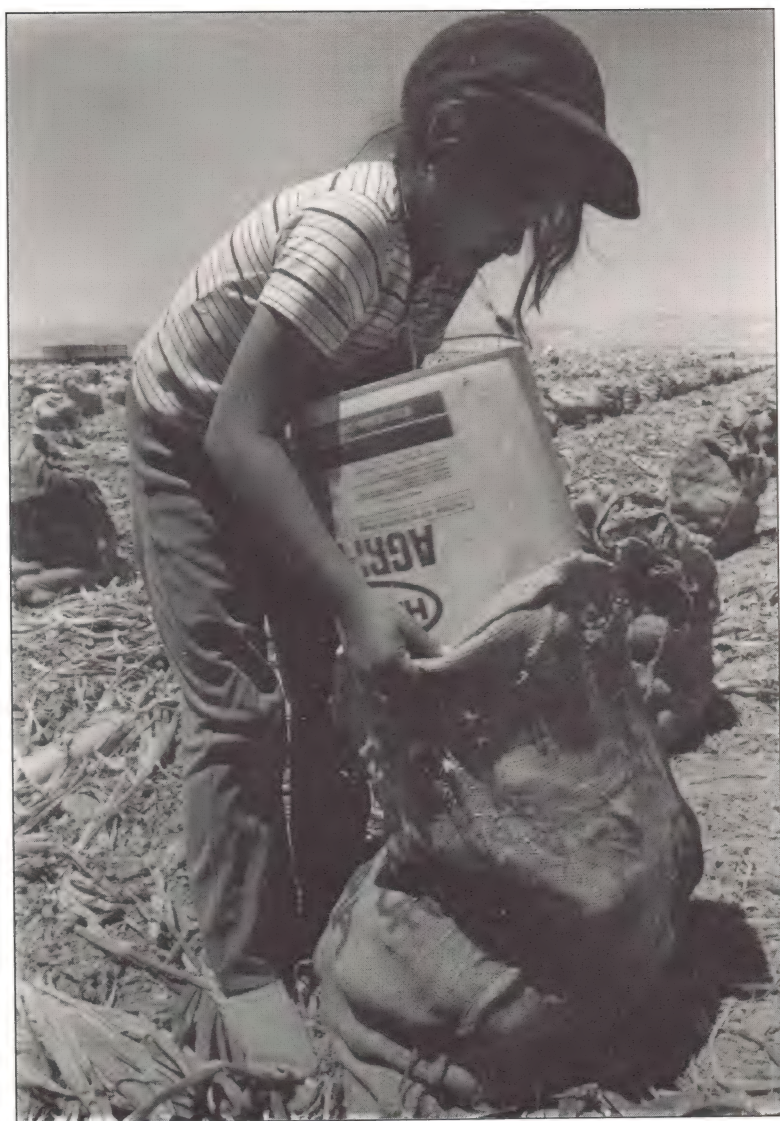


Figure 6. Female child farm worker laboring in the field, c. 1970.  
*United Farm Worker Collection. Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University.*



TO THE SACRAMENTO FRIENDS OF FARM WORKERS

CESAR CHAVEZ will be in Sacramento and Davis on Friday, March 11 for a series of events sponsored by your organization. You are invited to join MR. CHAVEZ for lunch at 12:00 noon on that day at the International Dishing Restaurant, 1414 - 5th Street, Sacramento. (No reservations necessary--get your food from one of the five specialty lines and come to the banquet room. Free parking in the upstairs garage.) MR. CHAVEZ will speak on legislation affecting farm workers which is being introduced in the United States Senate by The Hon. Harrison Williams, chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Migrant Labor.

If you cannot attend the luncheon, plan to hear MR. CHAVEZ in Davis Friday night, March 11, at 8:30 in the Chemistry Building Auditorium, California and Hutchison Drive on the UC campus. Tickets are available in advance (\$1 donation) at the National Farm Workers Association office, 521 - 14th Street, Sacramento (Phone 442-5348). Or if you prefer, you may attend and leave your donation at the door.

SIX WAYS YOU CAN HELP THE FARM WORKERS OF CALIFORNIA - - -

1. Make a monthly pledge of \$5, \$10, \$25, or whatever you can, to the Sacramento Friends of the Farm Workers, 521 - 14th Street, to help us carry out our programs of aid and support to the farm workers.
2. We are especially in need of clerical help to staff our office and bi-lingual, Spanish-speaking people.
3. If you have a truck or trailer and free week-ends, help us deliver food and other items to the farm workers.
4. If you can speak well before a group, offer your talents to our Speakers Bureau by calling Albie Davis at GL2-0917.
5. Walk our picket lines on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Call Erskine Fuller or Chuck Erby at 451-7374 for details as the time and location of the picketing may vary from week to week.
6. Letters should be written to congressmen and advertising editors.

Sample:

Dear Congressman (Senator):

The farm workers of California and the rest of America have too long been forced to live under sub-standard, repressive conditions without any recourse through the law.

In September, 1965, the workers in the vineyards of Delano, California, formed the National Farm Workers Association and went on strike to correct their miserable plight.

I (we) are in complete accord with the goals of the NFWA, and I (we) urge you to actively support a minimum wage for all farm workers and work to guarantee their bargaining rights under the Taft-Hartley Act.

Sincerely,

Sir:

You are probably aware of the deplorable conditions under which farm workers all over America have been forced to live for years without recourse through the law.

Now I (we) would like to bring your attention to the recently-formed National Farm Workers Association which has gone on strike against the grape growers of Delano, California; in order to improve their plight.

The largest of the growers is Schenley, and the National Farm Workers Association is asking that all Schenley products be boycotted.

In the (date) issue of (publication), I (we) noticed advertisements for the following Schenley products: (name them).

Since I (we) are in complete accord with the goals of the NFWA and support the Schenley boycott, I (we) want to urge that you of (publication) refuse all such ads for Schenley products in the future.

Sincerely,

The Hon. John E. Moas  
Room 2153  
Rayburn House Office Bldg.  
Washington, D.C.

The Hon. Thomas Michel  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C.

The Hon. George Murphy  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C.

Senator Albert Rodde  
State Capitol Building  
Sacramento, Calif.

Assemblyman Leroy Greene  
State Capitol Building  
Sacramento, Calif.

Assemblyman Ed L. Berg  
State Capitol Building  
Sacramento, California

Figure 7. Template letters and addresses of state and federal representatives. 1965-66 Student handout, Sacramento State College campus. Association of Students Incorporated, Grape Strike Collection 1965-1966, Series 7, 5:05. Special Collections and University Archives, California State University, Sacramento.

California are much higher than in many of the states with which our agriculture competes," often citing southern states whose wages were "50 cents an hour, or less."<sup>56</sup> In a 1965 letter, the congressman laid out his motivations for supporting the bill: "I favor the enactment of a national minimum farm wage because I believe it would help erase some of the present differentials which now operate to the disadvantage of California agriculture."<sup>57</sup> The bill, which Congress passed on May 25, 1966, raised the wage floor to \$1.40 on February 1, 1967, and then by an additional 20¢ twelve months later "for those under the wage-hour act." However, for seasonal farm workers, who made up the majority of the agricultural work force and did not fall under the wage-hour act, the minimum wage started at \$1.00 on February 1, 1967, and would top out at \$1.30 two years later.<sup>58</sup> Considering that farm workers in California demanded a wage of \$1.40 in 1965, Moss's bill failed to address their poverty-level employment, and it more likely sought to lessen the competitive burden confronting California agribusiness, which represented the largest agricultural industry in the nation.

While Moss and other Democrats worked to push through the bill for a national minimum wage in 1965, President Lyndon Johnson successfully promoted a string of bills he vowed would produce the "Great Society" in the United States. Coupled with the Civil Rights and Voting Rights acts that were previously passed under his administration, Johnson's Great Society put forth a package of social reform unparalleled since FDR's New Deal. Chávez commended many of the recent congressional programs, including job training, rural health clinics, and legal aid for migrant farm workers, as well as the establishment of agencies like the Office of Economic Opportunity, which awarded the NFWA a little over half of the \$500,000 grant the labor leader had applied for earlier in the year.<sup>59</sup> However, beyond sponsoring new programs and a vastly expanded bureaucracy, Johnson, like Moss, commenced a three-year position of silence towards the striking farm workers in California—an ironic position considering his public embrace of the African American civil rights movement that was concurrently being waged.

The president was no stranger to the plight of the Mexican American community or the rigorous demands of agribusiness. As first a U.S. congressman and then a senator between 1937 and 1960, Johnson had masterfully navigated a middle path between the two conflicting interests in southern Texas, garnering both the invaluable Mexican vote and the agriculture endorsements that helped fill his campaign coffer.<sup>60</sup> Although LBJ



may have sympathized with Chávez's movement, going against California agribusiness in the midst of national racial unrest and the war in Vietnam most likely posed such a severe political risk that marginalizing the farm workers on the fringes of the "Great Society" seemed like a safer political strategy for the time being.

As the strike and boycott entered their sixth month in March 1966, the farm workers received what would be their first and only genuine endorsement from a major political leader in their struggle against California growers. On March 14, the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Migratory Labor initiated hearings in Delano on the labor situation afflicting the Golden State. The members of the subcommittee present in the small farming town included Senator Robert F. Kennedy, the former attorney general and brother of the late President John F. Kennedy, who had been assassinated almost two and a half years earlier.<sup>61</sup> The hearings provided Chávez with the opportunity to relay the plight of the farm workers to government officials, framing the strike and boycott as not only a dispute over wages but as a fight for economic and social equality. Citing the urgent need for collective bargaining and the abolition of child labor, the union leader characterized these and other essential reforms as simply giving "people who work on farms . . . the same human rights as people who work in construction crews, or factories, or in offices."<sup>62</sup>

This embattled fight for equal rights, encouraged further by Chávez's moving testimony, received Kennedy's emphatic endorsement, which in turn further aroused the media to recognize the plight of farm workers. During his vigorous questioning of Sheriff Galyen, the senator denounced the hostile intervention and unlawful arrests by Delano police, suggesting that the "sheriff and district attorney read the Constitution of the United States."<sup>63</sup> Upon conclusion of the hearings, Kennedy traveled to the workers' Filipino Hall, where he declared his enthusiastic support for the strike and boycott, stating, "[W]e are here to help farm workers help themselves, not just to improve wages, but also . . . housing, living conditions, and education."<sup>64</sup> But the senator's support soon went beyond rhetoric, and he shocked everyone by picking up a NFWA huelga sign and marched with the picketers (see figure 8) at the 4,400-acre DiGiorgio ranch where Chávez's wife, Helen, had once worked. This highly publicized display of support astonished farm workers and unionists alike, causing Paul Schrade of the United Auto Workers to state, "I'd never seen a Democrat . . . do that before."<sup>65</sup>



Figure 8. César Chávez and Senator Robert F. Kennedy at the picket lines, March 1966. *El Malcriado*, March 1966, p. 9. Association of Students Incorporated, Grape Strike Collection 1965–1966, Series 7, 6:02. Special Collections and University Archives, California State University, Sacramento.

Inspired by their newly gained political support, yet still suffering from low morale and frustration, Chávez and the farm workers commenced what would be one of the longest protest marches in history. Labeled a “pilgrimage” by Chávez, the workers began a three-hundred-mile trek from Delano to Sacramento on March 17, 1966; they hoped to dramatize the six-month-old strike and boycott and thus pressure DiGiorgio and Schenley to negotiate as well as move California Governor Edmund “Pat” Brown to intervene in the dispute on the side of the union.<sup>66</sup> The march not only demonstrated the resolve and commitment of the farm workers but also the grass-roots base that served as the foundation of the movement, with workers organizing their own sleeping and food arrangements through the NFWA newspaper *El Malcriado*, which had been established by Chávez and the union in 1964.<sup>67</sup> As the workers continued their northern journey up the valley, media coverage intensified, capturing the marchers being met by supporters as well as by opponents who shouted obscenities and toasted the farm workers with bottles of Schenley liquor to mock the movement.<sup>68</sup>



By April 6, as the march prepared to enter the town of Stockton, the damaging media attention proved too much for the executives of Schenley Industries, who "caved" to the demands of the farm workers, settling a contract for an hourly wage of \$1.75.<sup>69</sup> A few days later, DiGiorgio followed suit, agreeing to negotiate with Chávez and the farm workers in the upcoming weeks. The news of the limited yet important victories brought inspiration and joy to the masses of weary marchers, whose lines had swelled from seventy-five to over five thousand by the time the "pilgrimage" reached Sacramento on Easter Sunday, April 10. As thousands of farm workers and supporters assembled around the steps of the State Capitol, Dolores Huerta, a long-time organizer and valued leader in the movement, demanded the passage of protective legislation and denounced the absence of Governor Brown and other politicians from the victory rally, stating, "[Y]ou cannot close your eyes and your ears to us any longer. You cannot pretend that we do not exist." In light of the march's success, Chávez briefly addressed the crowd, giving thanks and reminding the workers that "[i]t is well to remember there must be courage, but also, in victory there must be humility."<sup>70</sup>

Brown's refusal to meet the marching farm workers in Sacramento provided a vivid illustration of the political conflicts of interest that confronted Democrats, especially in California. However, unlike Moss, the governor did not have the luxury of silently avoiding the movement and thus had been forced to act behind the scenes in a desperate attempt to defuse a situation that posed a major threat to his reelection campaign. According to declassified FBI surveillance files on Chávez, Brown had tried to pressure the Senate Subcommittee on Migratory Labor not to hold hearings in Delano, stating that such actions "might be conducive to starting a riot," and most importantly "hurt . . . [his] chances during the California State Primary on June 7, 1966." Moreover, the report recounts that Brown had opposed "the march and was making every effort to muster his forces to stop [it]."<sup>71</sup> When his attempts to limit farm labor activism failed, the governor quickly sought refuge during the upcoming holiday, spending Easter vacationing with his family in the distant Palm Springs home of Frank Sinatra. However, the protesting farm workers were not so easily avoided, with over three hundred huelgistas and sympathizers marching through downtown Palm Springs in support of the strike and boycott and urging the governor into action.<sup>72</sup> Considering Brown's unwavering support of California agribusiness during his previous two terms as governor

and his close and personal friendship with the DiGiorgio family, his attempts to disrupt and then evade the movement most likely did not surprise many rank-and-file union members who viewed Pat Brown more as foe than friend.<sup>73</sup>

As negotiations between DiGiorgio and the farm workers commenced, the gains the union anticipated proved short-lived, with Chávez breaking off talks with the growers because of increased violence toward picketers at the corporation's Delano ranch. Upon leaving the negotiating table, Chávez announced another boycott of all DiGiorgio products, which included Tree Sweet juices and S&W canned foods.<sup>74</sup> The corporation, with annual sales averaging \$230 million, represented one of California's largest agricultural businesses. Its powerful ties and influence reached into all levels of government and corporate America. Robert DiGiorgio, the president of the agribusiness giant, for instance, sat on the executive boards of Bank of America, Union Oil Company, and other enterprises of interest to agribusiness. The DiGiorgio Corporation enjoyed historical notoriety for its long-time policy of disrupting farm-labor organizers, as depicted in John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*.<sup>75</sup> In May 1966, DiGiorgio continued this tradition of thwarting organizing farm workers, using the firm's power and influence to get the Kern County Superior Court to place injunctions on the NFWA's picket lines, limiting the number of strikers by law to only five. Undeterred by legal barriers, the innovative Chávez attached a wooden altar to the back of his broken-down station wagon and organized a worker "prayer meeting" outside the grower's Delano ranch. With the boycott spreading to cities such as San Francisco, New York, and Chicago through the work of students, clergy, and other sympathetic activists, DiGiorgio negotiated a backdoor deal with the Teamsters Union and announced immediate elections to decide which union would represent the corporation's farm labor. Chávez denounced the "crooked election," which did not allow the votes of striking workers but only that of current workers—i.e., "scabs" brought in to replace the *huelgistas*—thus ensuring a Teamster victory in the June plebiscite.<sup>76</sup>

The "rigged" election did not diminish the determination of the farm workers, with Chávez publicly stating that the "false election . . . sought to dupe the public into thinking [the DiGiorgios were] seeking just solutions to the strike."<sup>77</sup> Needing more than just public support, Chávez finally pinned down a surprised and elusive Governor Brown in July following a reelection speech at a convention of the Mexican American Political Asso-



ciation (MAPA), a largely white-collar group. After an embarrassed Brown greeted Chávez with the statement, "I guess this meeting is two months overdue," the governor had little choice but to order an investigation of the elections, asking his "personal friend" Robert DiGiorgio to cooperate.<sup>78</sup>

With new elections mandated by Brown, the NFWA and AWOC merged to become one large organizational tool, supported now by the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) to the tune of \$150,000 per year. In August 1966, the farm-labor merger culminated with a new union name, the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, which later shortened its moniker to the now familiar United Farm Workers (UFW). Next, the new union, with Chávez as its director, inaugurated a successful and rigorous campaign that resulted in a UFW election victory over the Teamsters and a groundbreaking contract with DiGiorgio. Farm workers received their first-ever employer-financed health and welfare program, vacation and holiday pay, and promotions and layoffs based on seniority.<sup>79</sup>

As the controversial and historically groundbreaking events of 1966 unfolded in California, John Moss continued his position of silence. Such a hesitant disposition was ironic in light of the bold and unprecedented legislation the congressman passed during that year. After an eleven-year political battle, Congress finally enacted the Moss-sponsored Freedom of Information Act on May 9, 1966. Successfully overcoming opposition from both Republicans and Democrats, especially from the Johnson administration, Moss's crusade for the "people's right to know" gave credence to the independent maverick reputation he had rightly earned during his tenure in Washington.<sup>80</sup> However, the hearings of the Senate subcommittee, Kennedy's avid support of the farm workers, and the twenty-five-day march that descended upon Moss's home district did not invoke any public reaction from Moss, and his congressional files contain no public statements or correspondence regarding the dramatic events. Even the struggle waged by the farm workers against DiGiorgio resulted in only one recorded communication in which the congressman suggested that the constituent, writing in support of the farm workers, redirect his "communications of support to [State] Senator Albert S. Rodda . . . and Assemblyman [Leroy] Greene," since the conflict was "a state matter . . . not requiring any kind of federal Congressional action."<sup>81</sup> This deference to state representatives can be seen as a luxury available to federal office holders who do not want to involve themselves in matters that are out of their constitutional jurisdiction or who want to avoid issues that might be politically damaging.

Yet the relationship between DiGiorgio and Moss warrants speculation. Though only three communications from DiGiorgio can be found in Moss's congressional files, with two of the letters addressed to all state and federal officials concerning the election, a strong likelihood exists of a political friendship between the pro-agribusiness congressman and the large agriculture corporation. Indeed, the only recorded letter in the lawmaker's papers addressed solely to Moss hints at the chances of such a relationship, with Robert DiGiorgio thanking the congressman for his speech to the executives of Bank of America in 1964 and other efforts on behalf of the firm, addressing the letter not by the traditional heading, "Dear Congressman," but with the personal heading, "Dear John."<sup>82</sup> In addition to considering Moss's relationship with California agribusiness, the congressman's silence on the farm labor movement can be brought into a clearer perspective by examining the political and social environment of the Golden State during this time period.

The gubernatorial election campaign in 1966 brought the social and racial unrest in California to the political forefront. It was encapsulated by the highly publicized and bitterly fought race between the two-term Democratic incumbent, Pat Brown, and the Republican challenger, Ronald Reagan. Exploiting the social conflict that had been raging through the state the previous two years, including the 1964 free speech and anti-war protests at Berkeley and the race riot in Watts in 1965, Reagan's campaign masterfully promoted the restoration of the racial and social status quo.<sup>83</sup> The former actor blasted Governor Brown for pandering to "beatniks and malcontents . . . who had given aid and comfort to the enemy," and denounced the incumbent's lack of stringent action to reduce racial tensions, asserting that, unlike Brown, Reagan would "act firmly and quickly to put down riots and insurrection."<sup>84</sup>

However, Reagan's promotion of the status quo in the Golden State went beyond the denouncement of anti-war demonstrations and racial conflict to encompass the battle being waged by farm workers against California growers. The Republican challenger criticized the limitations on bracero labor set by Congress and the State of California, publicly accusing Brown of neglecting agribusiness in favor of "a Great Society sociological experiment . . . that [used] California's farmers as guinea pigs."<sup>85</sup> The actor-politician's rhetoric favored the growers, as he charged that "California farmers [were] being used as scapegoats by the federal government," and ridiculed state efforts to recruit domestic workers to replace braceros, calling the attempts "expensive and useless."<sup>86</sup> The incumbent seemed almost



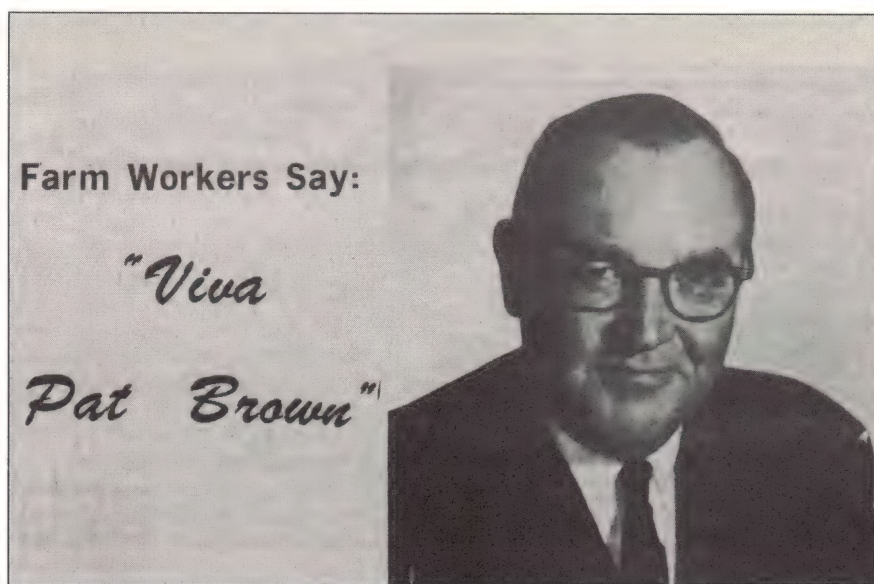


Figure 9. A UFW endorsement of Governor Pat Brown. *El Malcriado*, October 1966, p. 1. Association of Students Incorporated, Grape Strike Collection 1965–1966, Series 7, 6:02. Special Collections and University Archives, California State University, Sacramento.

defenseless against the challenger's damning charges. Though Brown received the endorsement of the farm workers (see figure 9) because of his belated but friendly push for a new DiGiorgio election and the promise of a collective-bargaining bill, the support behind the UFW's "Viva Pat Brown" campaign was less than enthusiastic. Brown's absence at the march to Sacramento, as well as his ongoing seeming reluctance to fully embrace Chávez's movement, created a climate of distrust toward the incumbent among farm workers, which was expressed in the October issue of the UFW's newspaper: "politicians have bought the farm worker's vote with promises and then betrayed them. It better not happen again."<sup>87</sup>

John Moss's congressional campaign in 1966 greatly resembled the "status quo" message that Ronald Reagan offered. Running for reelection for the seventh time, Moss safely sought the same union and pro-agriculture endorsements that had made up his political base since voters had sent him to Washington fourteen years earlier. Pro-agricultural support came from

organizations like Yolo Growers Inc. and the California Growers Association, corporations such as Bank of America, and even the Secretary of Agriculture, Orville Freeman, who touted the over \$800 million in agricultural exports that came from Moss's Third Congressional District.<sup>88</sup> Notwithstanding the obvious political benefits derived from embracing the powerful agribusiness sector in the Golden State, Moss marketed himself as a representative of the working man and, like many Democrats, the proud recipient of the "Union Label." His support from labor derived from over thirty-three unions and included the United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, the Workers of the Port of Sacramento, numerous building trade and carpenter unions, and even the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union.<sup>89</sup> But his sympathy did not seem to include all unions, as illustrated by the congressman's obstinate silence towards the UFW and the farm workers' movement. Such an ambiguous position allowed Moss to avoid an issue that displayed an evident conflict of political interests for California Democrats. If the congressman had any doubts of the damaging political effects to be derived from supporting the farm workers, Reagan's landslide victory dramatically revealed that endorsing the UFW would only weaken the old New Deal Coalition needed to fend off a prospective alliance between anti-union Republicans such as Reagan and the powerful industrial giants of California agribusiness.<sup>90</sup>

As Moss concluded yet another successful and safe reelection campaign and Brown suffered the crushing effects of Reagan's juggernaut, the Johnson administration issued an executive order regarding the continuing UFW strike and boycott. But it did not represent the political action Chávez and the farm workers had hoped for from Washington. On September 15, 1966, Lyndon Johnson requested an FBI investigation of César Chávez, who apparently was "being considered for [a] staff position at the White House."<sup>91</sup> Considering that the labor leader had the formal equivalent of an eighth-grade education, lacked the experience of the more politically seasoned members of MAPA, and had attained, by 1966, minimal national prominence, such a justification for the FBI probe was suspect, to say the least. The farm workers' movement had been under the watchful eye of the bureau for almost a year, in an attempt to sniff out Communist subversion—an effort that continuously turned up empty. Johnson's request was most likely aimed at validating further surveillance, which would provide the president with updates on Chávez and the emerging movement in Cal-



ifornia as well as the activists who supported it.<sup>92</sup> However, the bureau's surveillance of the farm workers extended beyond the cordial and cooperative relationship between J. Edgar Hoover and LBJ, continuing for almost another decade after the president's initial request.<sup>93</sup>

Despite the defeat of a supportive though tepid Governor Brown, the unrelenting Chávez hoped to keep the pressure on California grape growers, whom he viewed as the most exploitive ranchers in the valley. Under continued FBI surveillance, the UFW in 1967 announced a strike and boycott of Giumarra Vineyards, the largest and most profitable grape-growing operation in the state. Based in Bakersfield, Giumarra's grapes covered over eleven thousand acres but had lost over two-thirds of its work force by August 1967 as a result of the UFW strike.<sup>94</sup> Yet unlike during the previous two years, Chávez's strategy did not focus on picket lines to garner a union contract but instead used picketers and volunteers to pursue what the union saw as its most effective weapon—a nationwide boycott of Giumarra grapes. Farm workers and volunteers visited major distribution areas within the United States, including New York, Chicago, Houston, Phoenix, and San Francisco, to garner support and organize the boycott. However, unlike DiGiorgio and Schenley, the resources of Giumarra proved much too powerful and vast for the UFW's sharply focused embargo. Gaining the cooperation of other growers to ship his grapes under a hundred different names to befuddle both the consumers and union members,<sup>95</sup> Giumarra thwarted Chávez, who announced a nationwide boycott of all California table grapes in January 1968. In this effort, the labor leader relied heavily on moral appeals to middle- and high-income grape consumers to sacrifice their luxury fruit for "the cause."<sup>96</sup>

As the UFW commenced its boycott on an unprecedented national scale, frustration and anger began to plague the ranks of the farm workers. Low morale, poverty, and continued grower harassment and brutality started to erode the workers' resolve of non-violence. By 1968, with some union members favoring revenge and direct action, Chávez felt compelled to confiscate firearms and weapons from strikers and even expelled dedicated workers who incited violence either through their rhetoric or actions.<sup>97</sup> The labor leader denounced even harmless displays of disrespect toward authorities, including an incident described by Jessie De La Cruz, where protesting strikers in Palier "redecorated" Governor Reagan's car with stickers that read "Boycott Grapes" and "César Chávez for Governor." Though the governor had shunned strikers following a meeting with a local

grower, Chávez condemned his members' actions as "petty and childish."<sup>98</sup> When the rank and file ignored the warnings of the labor leader, who cautioned that violence would only alienate supporters and give police and growers the opportunity to crush the movement, Chávez decided to sacrifice himself to refocus the union's struggle and reaffirm its resolve of non-violence.<sup>99</sup>

On February 15, 1968, César Chávez began what would be a twenty-five-day fast to demonstrate his commitment to both the movement and its commitment to nonviolence. The fast, which lasted twice as long as Gandhi's 1924 hunger strike for peace, reached the national spotlight when the labor leader was forced to show up at the Kern County Courthouse for violation of the injunction violation that limited picket lines to only three strikers. The weakened Chávez, who then was in his thirteenth day of fasting, emerged as a selfless martyr in the national media, thus allowing the nation to put a face to the struggle.<sup>100</sup> When the labor leader ended his fast on March 11, Senator Robert Kennedy flew to Delano, accompanied by network reporters and thousands of workers, to celebrate Chávez's sacrifice and his display of peaceful dedication to La Causa. Five days later, the hopes of the struggling farm workers were raised as never before when Kennedy declared his candidacy for the Democratic Party nomination for president of the United States.<sup>101</sup>

Chávez and the UFW mobilized to aid the senator in the upcoming California primary election. Strike and boycott teams in the state redirected all their resources to the campaign, as Chávez personally promoted the "Viva Robert Kennedy" movement throughout the valley and in the Chicano barrios of cities such as Los Angeles and San Diego. The UFW's efforts aimed not only to help the senator win the primary in California but also to galvanize California's Mexican American population to register and vote. When the votes were tallied on June 4, 1968, it was clear that the efforts of Chávez and the farm workers had helped catapult Kennedy to a slim yet important victory in the race for the Democratic nomination.<sup>102</sup> Observers around the nation, and even the *London Sunday Times*, recognized the union's influence, crediting the UFW campaign as the single most decisive element in Kennedy's narrow victory.<sup>103</sup> Yet the joyous prospect of having a genuine supporter in the White House was cut short before the night was through when an assassin's bullet ended the senator's life as well as the hopes and dreams of thousands of farm workers.<sup>104</sup>



Kennedy's run for the Democratic presidential nomination did not garner support from all sections of society or even from fellow Democrats such as John Moss. The congressman's opposition to Kennedy's candidacy reveals a curious dimension in the relationship and political positions between the two politicians, who, besides a large generational difference, were generally more similar than they were different. Both Democrats embraced the concepts of social equality and the elimination of poverty that were represented by Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programs, and each even boldly diverged from the party line when it conflicted with his beliefs. Even more striking was their shared opposition to the Vietnam War, which was the main issue that compelled Kennedy to enter the race for the Democratic nomination; he stated that America's "right to the moral leadership of this planet" was at stake in the extraordinary upcoming election.<sup>105</sup> When Moss echoed these same sentiments to the president earlier in the year, the congressman never again received an invitation to come back to the Johnson White House.<sup>106</sup> Yet on the day that Kennedy announced his candidacy, John Moss publicly called the senator "an opportunist," opining that the senator's decision revealed still another attempt to "promote . . . the Kennedy image in California."<sup>107</sup> Though there may have been numerous reasons for the congressman's opposition, likely Kennedy's public support for the farm workers played a large part. A letter from Martha Dalton, a political activist in the Central Valley, notified Moss of the cancellation of their "Farmers Committee Lunch" and reassured him that anti-Kennedy efforts were underway in the California Primary; she wrote, "[Y]ou know the farmers all hate Bobby's guts . . . and plan in the following weeks to beat a few drums."<sup>108</sup> Moss's response reveals both his support for RFK's opponents and his lack of fondness towards the senator: "I hope the primaries today bring good news for either [Eugene] McCarthy or [Hubert] Humphrey. Both are old and close friends. I haven't had the same close, warm relationship with Bobby Kennedy."<sup>109</sup> Though John Moss sent the usual message of condolence to the senator's family after Kennedy's death, it can be surmised that the demise of the senator likely brought relief to agribusiness in California as well as to those who politically supported it.

In the aftermath of Kennedy's assassination, though, the farm workers' movement and their boycott lived on. By mid-1968, grape shipments had dropped sharply, declining by 34 percent in New York, 41 percent in Chicago, 42 percent in Boston, and 53 percent in Baltimore.<sup>110</sup> Faced with

major losses, the growers of the Golden State initiated a two-million-dollar public-relations campaign, hiring the prominent firm of Whitaker and Baxter to produce ads and bumper stickers promoting grape consumption through slogans like "Eat California Grapes, the Forbidden Fruit."<sup>111</sup> Governor Reagan aided the efforts of agribusiness by condemning the boycott as "illegal and immoral" and characterizing Chávez's efforts as "attempted blackmail."<sup>112</sup> The governor directed the state's Department of Agriculture, under the guidance of state Secretary of Agriculture and former Bank of America vice president Earl Coke, to engage in anti-boycott publicity and ordered state agencies to supply struck growers with welfare recipients and prison inmates to replace striking farm workers. The California Supreme Court later blocked this effort to provide such labor for agribusiness.<sup>113</sup> Reagan even joined Republican presidential nominee Richard Nixon in publicly denouncing the boycott, with the governor conspicuously eating grapes and calling the strikers "barbarians" while Nixon declared the "boycott of California grapes . . . clearly illegal."<sup>114</sup> Nixon's support for growers would continue as president, as he ordered the Department of Defense to increase substantially its purchase of grapes for the soldiers in Vietnam. By the middle of 1969, shipments to Vietnam skyrocketed from half a million pounds to two and a half million pounds, which averaged eight pounds of grapes per serviceman annually.<sup>115</sup> But Chávez and the UFW matched the increased intensity put forth by California growers and opposing politicians by capitalizing on a drastic and favorable shift in popular sentiment nationwide.

Despite the vigorous efforts of the growers, the UFW experienced numerous successes in 1968, as grape sales dropped by over 50 percent in major cities, and the state legislature of Hawaii passed a resolution to boycott all California grapes. Many city leaders across the United States followed Hawaii's lead as over seventeen mayors, including T. W. Costellow in New York City and Joseph Alioto in San Francisco, also announced a complete ban on all city grape purchases.<sup>116</sup> However, Chávez understood that the new social acceptance of his movement needed to be more effectively exploited and, in 1969, ordered picketing captains and organizational strategists to forty strategic cities across the United States and Canada, extending the boycott to include not only California grapes but also the grocery stores that sold them. Safeway, the West's largest grocery chain that accounted for 20 percent of Guimarra sales, suffered the first blow from the UFW's secondary boycott. Popular support for the boycott soon spread



beyond union members, students, religious congregations, and social activists to include large numbers of consumers in North America and abroad.<sup>117</sup> Relying on traditional labor tactics such as picketing and media exposure while devising new methods like the "shop in," where a housewife would initiate a mass walkout of customers by loudly scolding the store manager for selling "scab grapes," the UFW enjoyed its most successful campaign.<sup>118</sup> Within a year, the UFW had won support from three major grocery chains in Toronto, which was California's third-largest market for grapes; the largest grocery chain in Montreal; every single store in Chicago; and the major distribution terminal in Detroit, which closed off the shipment of grapes to an entire region.<sup>119</sup> Support for the farm workers even began to cross the Atlantic Ocean, with dockworkers in London refusing to unload grapes from the Golden State and 30 percent of the grocery chains in Sweden discontinuing all purchases.<sup>120</sup> Though the 1947 Taft-Hartley Amendment of the National Labor Relations Act prohibited secondary boycotts in the industrial sector, this legislation represented one of many laws that ignored both the legal rights and obligations of farm workers, providing a paradoxical situation in which powerful agribusiness now suffered the consequences of having lobbied for the exclusion of farm workers from federal labor law.

Just as Chávez had recognized and effectively embraced the turning popular tide in 1968, Democratic politicians also began to take heed of the changing momentum. Such a political shift was surely aided by the efforts of San Francisco Congressman Phil Burton, who, in the absence of Robert Kennedy, took the lead in advocating for the union. First elected to Congress in 1964, the chain-smoking, heavy-drinking lawmaker soon earned the same maverick reputation as had Kennedy and Moss, showing little hesitation in taking a stand, frequently exploding at friends and foes alike, using the salty language similar to that of the dockworkers he represented.<sup>121</sup> Burton was no stranger to the abuses farm workers suffered under the dominating power of California agribusiness. During his eight years in the state legislature before his election to the House, Burton had waged a bold and consistent battle against California's big growers and their political allies. As chairman of a 1959 state legislature interim committee investigating the problems of farm labor and braceros, Burton candidly told a grower who was testifying on wages, "I'm going to your property when this hearing is over and find out exactly what you are paying."<sup>122</sup>

A strong supporter of Fred Ross's Community Service Organization (CSO), Burton had developed a close personal relationship with both Dolores Huerta and César Chávez, helping the two organizers pass AB5 in 1961, which had, for the first time, provided limited Social Security and unemployment benefits to farm workers in California.<sup>123</sup> Continuing similar activism in Washington, Burton endorsed RFK's 1968 campaign and lobbied hard at the Democratic convention for political support for the farm workers' movement.<sup>124</sup> However, unlike other Democrats such as Moss, the San Franciscan enjoyed a relatively safe district that was not only "ultraliberal" and heavily unionized but, most importantly, had no agriculture; his support for the strike and boycott did not pose the same political risk that confronted his Central Valley counterparts. But since Burton had just entered Congress one year prior to the grape strike, his activism during the early years of the movement was most likely ineffective.<sup>125</sup>

A month after Burton's strenuous efforts at the 1968 Democratic convention, the newly anointed presidential candidate Hubert Humphrey announced his support for the UFW and its boycott of California grapes. Campaigning in San Francisco's Mission District, the vice president pinned a union button on his lapel and stated, "[T]he worker in the fields is entitled to all protection . . . and when I'm president, he'll have those rights, make no mistake about it."<sup>126</sup> Although Burton's lobbying may have played some role in Humphrey's sudden endorsement of the movement, other considerations surely help to account for him having taken this stand.

In a 1965 letter to President Johnson regarding Vietnam, the vice president, while expressing his concerns about escalating the war, had assured LBJ of his loyalty to both the administration and to the Democratic Party.<sup>127</sup> Humphrey's desire to back Johnson unequivocally meant that he would not take a public stand on the farm labor strike and boycott without a signal from the president. Freed from such restraints in 1968, Humphrey now stood on his own ground in favor of the farm worker.<sup>128</sup> Nevertheless, Richard Nixon's opposition and scurrilous rhetoric against the farm workers likely provided the most significant reason for the announcement of Humphrey's endorsement, which helped boost the boycott into a potent partisan issue for the upcoming election. Although the vice president's belated support after years of silence raised significant questions within the union, strong encouragement from Secretary of Labor Willard Wirtz finally swayed Chávez and the farm workers to back Humphrey as the Democra-



tic candidate. However, such support by the union seems to have embodied the same partisan calculations that played a role in Humphrey's own shift, with UFW flyers taking on a more anti-Nixon than pro-Humphrey message, spouting slogans such as, "Don't let Nixon take away what you've won" and "You [Nixon] swallowed scab grapes and now you're choking on them."<sup>129</sup>

As Phil Burton's activism began to strike a chord within the party and Hubert Humphrey staked out new partisan ground, John Moss also took heed of the changing political waters of 1968. However, the first priority for the congressman that year was to be reelected, which Moss accomplished easily by safely relying on his traditional political base of growers and selected unions. The lawmaker received the usual endorsements and backing from the cannery workers', carpenters', warehousemen's, and locomotive engineers' unions as well as from agricultural interests such as Farmers Community Bank, the California Wine Institute, the California Growers Association, and, of course, Bank of America.<sup>130</sup> Such interest groups and organizations had no reason to believe that their pro-agribusiness congressman would proceed any differently than he had in the previous sixteen years. On numerous occasions, in fact, Moss requested reports of the status of the grape boycott on behalf of California agribusiness and promised an "immediate investigation of the farm workers' use of secondary boycotts."<sup>131</sup>

However, correspondence with constituents during the November 1968 election seemed to indicate a watershed period in regard to the congressman's position on farm labor. Two letters from Moss in response to Washington's attempts to weaken the UFW by shipping grapes to Vietnam, a practice that apparently existed before Nixon's election, illustrate this change. In October 1968, Reverend J. P. Sanders sent Moss an article from Sacramento's *Catholic Herald* that deplored the federal government's shipments of grapes to soldiers in Southeast Asia. The priest noted that the value of grape exports to American military personnel in Vietnam had escalated from "\$40,575 in 1966 . . . [to] over \$500,000 in 1968."<sup>132</sup> In a brief reply, Moss simply conceded, "[The] situation did exist, but has now been effectively corrected by the Federal Government."<sup>133</sup> Nevertheless, in a November 18, 1968, letter to Sacramento constituent Robert Breidenstein on the same issue, the recently reelected Moss not only reiterated that grape shipments to Vietnam had been discontinued but went further to state, "I believe that all agricultural workers should be accorded the same rights and privileges and protections given industrial workers and will propose to work

toward that objective."<sup>134</sup> This pronouncement marked the first recorded statement by John Moss regarding the strike and boycott of California grapes, over three years after Chávez and the farm workers had begun their battle against the growers of the Golden State.

Numerous letters from the congressman now echoed his new position of support for the farm workers. Moss noted he had "*long felt* [author's emphasis] that agricultural workers should be afforded the same protections . . . and rights as other workers in their occupation," and favored amending much of the legislation that had historically excluded farm workers.<sup>135</sup> By the spring of 1969, as the UFW's boycott gained unprecedented popular backing and success, Moss's support of the farm workers went beyond political rhetoric. In a letter responding to correspondence from the vice president of the Cannery League of California railing against the "illegal and devastating actions conducted by farm workers," the congressman officially staked a position against the powerful agribusiness he had long supported, stating, "I must confess in all candor that I do not agree with you on this issue and, in fact, will co-sponsor legislation in the next few days which would extend collective bargaining to farm laborers."<sup>136</sup>

Moss's collective bargaining legislation received acclaim from newspaper editors throughout California. For example, the Sacramento Bee stated that the congressman and others in the House were "right to put themselves squarely behind this legislation" that was "dedicated to correcting the paramount inequity suffered by farm workers."<sup>137</sup> Considering the lawmaker's three years of silence and over sixteen years of vigorous support for agribusiness, his displays of righteous self-congratulations must have seemed ironic to California growers and, in moments of honest reflection, even to Moss himself.

A combination of social and political forces caused the 1968 swing of the political pendulum and thus John Moss's transmogrification. The rising support, nationally and internationally, of a successful boycott, as well as the media's increasing attention to the enduring hardships of farm workers, had made the position of silence by a California Democrat untenable. Nixon's election not only ushered in a Republican administration, but his harsh rhetoric solidified divisional lines across the nation, which had been clearly illustrated by Humphrey's own sudden shift in favor of the farm-labor movement during the presidential campaign. But strident opposition from conservatives went beyond transforming the boycott into a partisan



issue, creating a new political spectrum of agriculture that placed the movement solely between a Republican-backed agribusiness and the Democrat-backed farm workers. In this more-polarized political environment, Moss no longer could afford the luxury of walking an ambiguous middle road of supporting agribusiness while remaining impervious to the pleas of farm laborers—a balancing act he and many Democrats had successfully performed throughout Johnson's presidency.

The emerging party lines in national politics during 1968 do not, however, fully account for the congressman's abrupt acceptance of the UFW's strike and boycott. While Humphrey endorsed the movement a month after the Democratic convention, Moss remained silent, not echoing the supporting sentiments of his fellow Truman Democrat until after safely winning reelection. Such belated action not only demonstrated expedient political calculation on the congressman's part but also the complexity confronting California Democrats in the face of agribusiness's looming power and influence. Phil Burton's example of labor activism, moreover, did not seem to hold the same sway over Moss as it did with party members representing union or liberal districts. Moss's congressional papers, in any case, do not contain correspondence with the San Francisco representative on the UFW boycott and strike. Clearly, Moss and Burton were not close political allies on labor and social issues.<sup>138</sup>

Although the party's new disposition toward the farm workers provided an important impetus in the congressman's own shift, changes in Sacramento County surely influenced Moss's thinking also. By 1968, both the number of farms and acreage devoted to agriculture in Moss's district had decreased significantly, giving way to new urban growth that continues to mark the area in the twenty-first century. As counties in the lower Central Valley, such as Kern, expanded the amount of acreage devoted to agriculture, the number of farms in those areas surpassed those in the Sacramento region for the first time. Indeed, with Moss's district transformed into a new metropolitan center where over 60 percent of the population now worked in white-collar jobs, the lawmaker no longer had to pander to California growers and could finally sever the ties of servitude that had bound his political career for over sixteen years.<sup>139</sup>

In addition to the multitude of changes taking place within the Democratic Party and the congressman's district, the farm workers' ability to mount an international boycott and mobilize a successful campaign for Robert Kennedy undoubtedly played a large role in Moss's positional

switch. Considering that RFK represented the first major political leader to genuinely support the movement, the influence of the fallen senator on other Democrats, especially in California, cannot be overstated. Unlike the UFW's tepid endorsement of Pat Brown in 1966, the union's principal role in Kennedy's victory two years later included vigorous campaigning, registering over 200,000 new voters, and displaying a powerful and influential political base in the state that could effectively offset the political power of California agribusiness.<sup>140</sup>

Two letters from Congressman Moss in July 1969 regarding a bill pending in the California state legislature that would grant U.S. citizens who spoke and read only Spanish the right to vote, reveal his acceptance and recognition of this emerging political base. Writing to U.S. Attorney General John Mitchell, Moss expressed his political interest in the 500,000 new voters who would be added in California if the legislation passed, asking Mitchell about the bill's legality and, most importantly, asking, "[W]hat effect would this have on these citizens with respect to Federal elections?"<sup>141</sup> At the same time, the congressman sent a letter to California State Senator George Deukmejian, in which he expressed his support of the bill, stating, "I heartily endorse this legislation and hope it is favorably acted upon. This legislation is very much needed . . . to end the unequal treatment of citizens which California voting law presently permits."<sup>142</sup> Moss's efforts again must have seemed ironic to some, not only because he was now meddling in "state matters," which he had formerly cited as his reason for avoiding certain issues, but because he was now fighting for the Mexican American population he had previously ignored.

As Moss and others shifted political allegiances in 1968, not all Democrats completely abandoned the well-traveled middle road between growers and farm labor. Even Jesse Unruh, the politically pragmatic Speaker of the California State Assembly and one of the masters of wheeling and dealing in Sacramento, struggled to extricate himself from what became an untenable perch on the fence. First elected to the legislature in 1954, "Big Daddy," as he was called, emerged in the 1960s as one of the most powerful Democrats in California, serving as assembly speaker from 1961 to 1974.<sup>143</sup> Though Unruh's papers contain no record of his actions during the early years of the UFW's strike and boycott, by 1968 the Democratic speaker was attempting to balance the conflicting interests of the farm workers and California agribusiness. In a letter to Ronald Reagan during the fall of that year, "Big Daddy" urged the governor to bring both par-



ties together and "seek a negotiated settlement," since the "present stalemate [would] only lead to ruin . . . and economic disaster for everyone involved." In closing, the speaker assured Reagan of his middle-ground position, stating that his only concern was "labor peace and continued prosperity for this vital industry."<sup>144</sup>

However, such a neutral position did not prove so easily sustainable for the California Democrat, who was put on the spot one month later when U.C. Berkeley announced a complete ban on grape purchases. When Unruh told reporters he supported the actions of the university's purchasing agent, Scott Wilson, a certain segment of the media hailed the comment as the speaker's first public support of the farm workers' movement.<sup>145</sup> Political positioning aside, Unruh's support for the farm workers seemed to be genuine, with "Big Daddy" battling throughout 1969 to defeat Republican-backed collective-bargaining bills that organized labor deemed "unfair" while also strongly endorsing a measure that would extend unemployment insurance to farm workers.<sup>146</sup>

Yet as Unruh worked behind the scenes in support of the UFW, his public statements greatly resembled those that the cautious Pat Brown had uttered just three years earlier. As a professional politician who aimed at challenging Reagan for the governorship of California in the 1970 election, Unruh was wary of unduly antagonizing the growers of the Golden State. Staff member Lew Paper advised the speaker to publicly maintain the middle road regarding the movement, reminding him to "color remarks with neutrality rather than blatantly placing blame on [the] growers' shoulders."<sup>147</sup> Unlike other Democrats such as Moss, Unruh did not express unequivocal support for the union but continued to heed the advice of Paper, focusing solely on Reagan and the GOP's "inaction" to push for a negotiated settlement of the labor dispute.<sup>148</sup> In light of the speaker's supportive actions behind the scenes, such a feckless public disposition illuminated how some Democrats, especially those running for state office, still dreaded the awesome power of California agribusiness.

By 1970, as the new political lines solidified, the growers increasingly felt the devastating brunt of the strike and boycott, with wholesale prices of grapes dropping below their production cost and millions of dollars' worth of the crop rotting on vines throughout the Central Valley due to a lack of markets.<sup>149</sup> In June, Lionel Steinberg, who owned three of Coachella's largest vineyards, made one last desperate attempt to avoid set-

tlement with the UFW by pleading for assistance from the once pro-agribusiness congressman in a letter addressed with the personal heading, "Dear John." Referencing a previous telephone conversation between the grower and Moss, Steinberg reiterated the boycott's destructive effects on agribusiness, including the decline in the number of California grape growers from 236 in 1963 to only 52 by 1970. The grower then asked Moss to telephone, "as an interested congressman," two large parent companies that controlled the majority of grape purchases in cities like Chicago and New York and added, "[It is] very important you do not mention me by name or company."<sup>150</sup> Such a letter provides a vivid illustration of the close relationship that once existed between the congressman and agribusiness. However, Moss's reply now showed Steinberg and other growers that that relationship was over. He wrote, "I am of the firm opinion that there is nothing that can be done at this end but let time take its course."<sup>151</sup> With no other avenue left to try, a few weeks later Lionel Steinberg became the first grower to agree to a contract settlement with the UFW, thus further weakening California agribusiness's once-united front.<sup>152</sup>

In subsequent weeks, numerous growers followed Steinberg's lead, negotiating and signing contracts with the union. When on the evening of July 25 Chávez received a call from Giumarra wanting to negotiate a contract, the union leader, with the momentum and power now in his corner, demanded that Giumarra round up the remaining twenty-eight growers that were left in the valley to negotiate one large, all-encompassing deal. Chávez aspired to obtain an agreement, unlike the contracts signed with Schenley and DiGiorgio three years earlier, that would go beyond wages to include additional benefits and protections for the union's rank and file. By the following night, completed negotiations yielded a contract that not only provided for an hourly rate of \$1.65 to \$1.80 but also a joint grower/worker committee to regulate pesticide use in the fields, piece-rate bonus increases, and a compulsory payment of 10¢ an hour by growers into the union's Robert F. Kennedy Health and Welfare Fund. However, to Chávez, a closed-door contract did not satisfy the need for respect and recognition among the many *campesinos* who had sacrificed enormously for La Causa. On July 29, 1970, the labor leader met Giumarra and other growers in the union's Reuther Hall where the two groups signed the contracts publicly, thus ending the strike and boycott of California grapes and the five-year struggle of the United Farm Workers.<sup>153</sup>



The farm workers' stunning victory dealt a tremendous blow to the powerful agribusiness of California. The blow, however, proved neither long lasting nor fatal. Chávez and the UFW would continue to battle against the exploitation of California farm workers throughout the 1970s and 80s—and the struggle continues into the twenty-first century. John Moss's vacillating position towards the farm workers' movement reveals more than just a simplified case of the complexity of influences that sway every elected official. Rather, in light of the bold behavior displayed by the congressman on many issues throughout his twenty-six-year career, Moss's stance on the strike and boycott serves as a glaring reminder of both the pronounced influence that powerful industries wield in American politics and the servile position of elected officials in the face of such power. Economists have often noted cynically that "elected officials form policies to maximize votes and thus remain in office, which results in a biased political system . . . based on faulty policies."<sup>154</sup> The position of John Moss surely demonstrates this. Siding with agribusiness in the Golden State until the social and political forces in 1968 caused a swing of the political pendulum, Moss, like many other Democrats, found that support for the farm workers' movement came to represent not only a partisan necessity but also an obvious shift in public opinion among large segments of society toward correcting labor exploitation. Emulating the early support of Robert Kennedy or Phil Burton for the UFW would have been considered political suicide for politicians such as Moss, who as a congressman was not only up for reelection every two years but, most importantly, up for reelection in the rural Central Valley of California. His shift in 1968 illuminates the notion that a popular movement, when solidified and efficiently organized, can effectively counter the controlling political influence of powerful industries and the politicians who cater to them. Today the United States pronounces itself the world's democratic leader, but domestic politics often challenges the validity of that claim. Powerful industries still make profits at the expense of laborers like Chávez and the farm workers, still control the boldest of politicians like Moss, and still keep millions suffering and longing for another swing of the political pendulum.

#### NOTES

I would like to thank the *Quarterly's* editor, Merry Ovnick, and the anonymous reviewer for all their help and guidance. Most importantly, I would like to express my unwavering gratitude to Dr. Joseph A. Pitti—a man who prodigiously personifies the esteemed titles of historian, professor, and mentor.

<sup>1</sup> Susan Ferriss and Ricardo Sandoval, *The Fight In The Fields: Cesar Chavez and the Farm Workers Movement* (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1997), 139.

- <sup>2</sup> Eugene Nelson, *Huelga: The First Hundred Days of The Great Delano Grape Strike* (Delano, CA: Farm Worker Press, 1966), 72.
- <sup>3</sup> Ronald B. Taylor, *Chavez and the Farm Workers* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975), 182. *La Causa* (the cause) was the battle cry of farm workers and the union in the fight for recognition and economic equality. Although Chávez refused to publicly call the strike and boycott a civil rights movement, consistently framing the union fight as a workers' struggle, most farm workers nevertheless viewed the causes for unionization and civil rights as synonymous.
- <sup>4</sup> *California Statistical Abstract: 1965* (Sacramento: State of California Press, 1966), 53, 191.
- <sup>5</sup> Leo Rennert, "John Moss: He Pursued Lonely Causes with a Fierce Tenacity," *Sacramento Bee*, 6 December 1997, A3. Also available from the John Moss Memorial Website at [http://www.moss-fitch.com/J\\_moss.html](http://www.moss-fitch.com/J_moss.html) (hereafter Moss Memorial Website).
- <sup>6</sup> Steve Wiegand, "John Moss Delivered the Goods for Capital District," *Sacramento Bee*, 6 December 1997, B9. Also available from Moss Memorial Website.
- <sup>7</sup> *Who's Who in Government, 1975-1976* (Chicago: Marquis Who's Who Inc., 1975), 436.
- <sup>8</sup> John E. Moss, Jr., "Oral History Interview of John E. Moss," interviewed by Donald B. Seney (Sacramento, CA, 3, 17, 24, October 1989), *California State Government Oral History Program* (Sacramento: State Printing Office, 1990), 3-10 (hereafter, Moss Oral Interview). Moss's interview is mostly focused on his two terms as a California State Assemblyman but offers insight and references to his twenty-six-year political career in Washington.
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 5. Although it is not addressed in the oral interview, it is interesting to speculate whether the success of fellow Democrat and Utahan Culbert Olson played any inspirational role in Moss's political career. Like Moss, Olson worked his way up from meager beginnings after his migration to California, being elected to both the U.S. and California State Senate before serving as California governor from 1939-1943.
- <sup>10</sup> "Interior Official Brands Moss as Irresponsible," *Sacramento Bee*, 30 April 1960, A9.
- <sup>11</sup> Ben Price, "Congressman John Moss Is One of Few Fighting Government Secrecy," *Sacramento Bee*, 3 May 1964, B6.
- <sup>12</sup> "Moss Challenges Seniority System" *Sacramento Bee*, 21 April 1968, B7. The article tells of Moss's efforts to spearhead a major challenge against senior Congressman William L. Dawson, chairman of the Government Operations Committee. With his committee facing budget cuts, Dawson decided to slash the number of House subcommittees, one of which included Moss's Subcommittee on Foreign Operations and Government Information, a panel that had often offended the White House and congressional supporters by raising tough questions about U.S. involvement in South Vietnam. According to House tradition, Moss was expected to assent to Dawson's decision, but instead publicly challenged the congressional seniority system, calling for a democratization of House procedures.
- <sup>13</sup> Rennert, A3.
- <sup>14</sup> "Letter to Harley O. Staggers," 12 February 1964, Civil Rights Folder 83:7, John Emerson Moss Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, California State University, Sacramento (hereafter, Moss Papers). The letter sent to Staggers and nine other members of Congress thanked them for their assistance during the debate over the Civil Rights Bill, during which Moss was acting majority whip in the absence of Hale Boggs.
- <sup>15</sup> Steve Wiegand, "John Moss Delivered the Goods for Capital District," *Sacramento Bee*, 6 December 1997, B9.
- <sup>16</sup> Moss Oral Interview, 64.
- <sup>17</sup> Frank A. Mesple, "The Rise and Fall of Responsible Liberalism," in *The Rumble of California Politics, 1848-1970*, ed. Royce D. Delmatier, Clarence F. McIntosh, and Earl G. Waters (New York: John Wiley and Sons Inc., 1970), 357; Taylor, 194. Also see Lawrence J. Jelinek, *Harvest Empire: A History of California Agriculture* (San Francisco: Boyd and Fraser, 1982).
- <sup>18</sup> J. Craig Jenkins, *Politics of Insurgency: The Farm Worker Movement in the 1960s* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 38, 45.
- <sup>19</sup> Royce D. Delmatier, "The Republican Party's California," in *The Rumble of California Politics, 1848-1970*, ed. Delmatier, et al., 216. For a detailed history of the development of California agriculture, see Richard Steven Street, *Beasts of the Fields: A Narrative History of California Farm Workers, 1769-1913* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2004.)
- <sup>20</sup> Jenkins, 53.



- <sup>21</sup> Patrick H. Mooney and Theo J. Majka, *Farmers' and Farm Workers' Movements: Social Protest in American Agriculture* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995), 151. Also see Melvyn Dubofsky and Stephen Burwood, eds., *Agriculture During the Great Depression* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1990.)
- <sup>22</sup> Richard J. Jensen and John C. Hammerback, eds., *The Words of Cesar Chavez* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2002), 45.
- <sup>23</sup> Dick Meister and Anne Loftis, *A Long Time Coming: The Struggle to Unionize America's Farm Workers* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co. Inc., 1977), 72, 73; Jenkins, 78, 79; Mooney, 152. Powerful railroad unions forced the federal government to cease the importation of braceros as track workers by 1948. For more on the migrant experience in California, see James N. Gregory, *American Exodus: The Dust Bowl Migration and Okie Culture in California* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid., 152. For more on the Bracero Program, see Ernesto Galarza, *Merchants of Labor: The Mexican Bracero Story* (Santa Barbara, CA: McNally and Loftin Publishers, 1964).
- <sup>25</sup> Jenkins, 79, 80; Mooney, 153.
- <sup>26</sup> Mooney, 152. For an in-depth look at California agriculture after World War II, see Ernesto Galarza, *Farm Workers and Agribusiness in California, 1947-1960* (South Bend, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1977).
- <sup>27</sup> Jenkins, 54.
- <sup>28</sup> Jensen, 43; Jenkins, 78.
- <sup>29</sup> "Fact Sheet on Migratory Labor from U.S. Department of Labor," 1 November 1961, Grape Strike 1965 Folder, series 7, 5:06, Association of Students Incorporated, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, California State University, Sacramento (hereafter, ASI).
- <sup>30</sup> "Memo to U.S. Department of Labor," 22 August 1962, Moss Papers 100:15.
- <sup>31</sup> "Letter to Frank Watanabe," 25 January 1962, Moss Papers 100:15.
- <sup>32</sup> "Letter from Agricultural Council of California," 12 March 1962, Moss Papers 75:15.
- <sup>33</sup> "Speech to Sacramento County Chamber of Commerce Agribusiness Committee," 27 November 1962, Moss Papers 335:20.
- <sup>34</sup> *California Statistical Abstract: 1965*, 24.
- <sup>35</sup> "Letter to California Bean Growers Association," 16 February 1965, Moss Papers 2:31.
- <sup>36</sup> "Speech to Bank of America," 5 October 1964, Moss Papers 335:40.
- <sup>37</sup> Delmatier, 213-14. For more on Giannini, the building of Bank of America, and the bank's early ties to agriculture, see Felice A. Bonadio, *A. P. Giannini: Banker of America* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994); Gerald D. Nash, *A. P. Giannini and the Bank of America* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992). The holding company that gave rise to the Bank of America was created in 1928, but Giannini's banking empire dates back to the founding of the Bank of Italy in 1904.
- <sup>38</sup> "Letter from Earl Coke, V.P. of Bank of America," 11 March 1965, Moss Papers 102:17.
- <sup>39</sup> "Letter to Senator George Murphy," 24 August 1965, Moss Papers 102:18.
- <sup>40</sup> "Letter from W. Willard Wirtz, Secretary of Labor," 1 March 1966, Moss Papers 102:19.
- <sup>41</sup> Ferriss, 86; Jenkins, 134. For a good early history on the grape strike, see John Gregory Dunne, *Delano, The Story of the California Grape Strike* (New York: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux Publishing, 1967).
- <sup>42</sup> Mooney, 151.
- <sup>43</sup> Ferriss, 92, 102. Although the farm workers enjoyed considerable support from the religious sector, the Catholic Church hierarchy was divided, especially in the lower Central Valley, where many of the grape growers were Catholic and generously donated to the church. See Taylor, 167; Meister and Loftis, 143.
- <sup>44</sup> Mooney, 154; Ferriss, 102.
- <sup>45</sup> Ferriss, 91, 114.
- <sup>46</sup> Mooney, 156. For a history on the earlier battles against DiGiorgio's exploitation of farm labor, see Ernesto Galarza, *Spider in the House & Workers in the Field* (South Bend, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1970).
- <sup>47</sup> Nelson, 60; Mooney, 155.
- <sup>48</sup> Jenkins, 153. For more on Walter Reuther, see Frank Cormier, *Reuther* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1970); Victor G. Reuther, *The Brothers Reuther and the Story of the UAW: A Memoir* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976).
- <sup>49</sup> Quoted in Ferriss, 114.
- <sup>50</sup> Ibid., 87, 92, 96; Nelson, 29. Nelson also details several instances of growers ordering or bribing strike breakers to initiate violence against the picketers.
- <sup>51</sup> "Reports of Violence," *El Malcriado*, September 1965, 10, ASI series 7, 5:05.

<sup>52</sup> Ferriss, 106–7.

<sup>53</sup> Jenkins, 150.

<sup>54</sup> "Template letters and addresses of Sacramento representatives," ASI, series 7, 5:05.

<sup>55</sup> "Huelga Pickets Beaten by Store Owners," *SNAP News*, 15 July 1966, ASI series 7, 5:06. The assault on the picketers by the owners of Quality Market resulted from the informational picket line that was organized outside the store after the owners refused to remove from public sale their inventory of DiGiorgio products. Since the police and district attorney refused to investigate, the motives behind the store owners' violent attacks—i.e., possible ties to agribusiness—are unknown.

<sup>56</sup> "Letter to John Menz," 11 December 1964, Moss Papers 102:16.

<sup>57</sup> "Letter to William Cook," 5 October 1965, Moss Papers 2:31.

<sup>58</sup> "Minimum Wage Hike Gets Easy Approval," *Sacramento Bee*, 27 May 1966, ASI series 7, 6:04.

<sup>59</sup> Julie Leininger Pycior, *LBJ and Mexican Americans: The Paradox of Power* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997), 155–56. Also see Craig A. Kaplowitz, *LULAC, Mexican Americans, and National Policy* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004). For more on Johnson's Great Society, see John A. Andrew III, *Lyndon Johnson and the Great Society* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee Inc., 1998).

<sup>60</sup> Pycior, 35–38, 46–49, 105.

<sup>61</sup> Taylor, 159.

<sup>62</sup> Quoted in Ferriss, 116.

<sup>63</sup> Quoted in Meister and Loftis, 144.

<sup>64</sup> Ron Taylor, "Kennedy Promises to Help Laborers Gain Better Wages, Living Conditions," *Sacramento Bee*, 16 March 1966, ASI series 7, 6:04.

<sup>65</sup> Quoted in Ferriss, 117.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 117; Jenkins, 153.

<sup>67</sup> Ferriss, 120.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.

<sup>69</sup> Mooney, 158.

<sup>70</sup> Jenkins, 154; quoted in Ferriss, 123. It is important to note that while the union contract only covered wages with Schenley Industries, as would the future contract with DiGiorgio, the mere recognition of the union by these two large growers was unprecedented in California history.

<sup>71</sup> Memorandum, "Proposed March Sponsored by Congress of Racial Equality . . ." 11 March 1966, *Federal Bureau of Investigation File on César Chávez* 100-444762 (hereafter, FBI Files). Files obtained at California State University Sacramento Library, Microfilm. For an impressively detailed and comprehensive examination of the FBI Files on Chávez, see Steven Richard Street, "The FBI's Secret File on César Chávez," *Southern California Quarterly* 78, no. 4 (1996): 347–84. While Street references a number of works on Hoover, one I found useful that was not mentioned is William W. Turner, *Hoover's F.B.I.* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1993). Turner is a former FBI agent and provides invaluable insight into Hoover, the workings of the bureau, and its use of surveillance. For the bureau's statute on labor-management relations, see 168. For electronic surveillance and how it was disguised in bureau files, see 287–99. This latter information provided by Turner calls into question Street's assertion that no wiretapping occurred in the FBI's surveillance of Chávez and the farm workers. (Street, 349).

<sup>72</sup> Memorandum, "Protest March Sponsored by National Farm Workers . . ." FBI Files, 11 April 1966. The memo included a clip from a Riverside newspaper, *The Daily Enterprise*.

<sup>73</sup> Ethan Rarick, *California Rising: The Life and Times of Pat Brown* (University of California Press, 2005), 350–52.

<sup>74</sup> Ferriss, 124, 126.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 126–27. Steinbeck modeled the violent Gregorio growers in the story after the DiGiorgio Corporation. For more on DiGiorgio's long-established efforts to thwart unionization, see H. L. Mitchell, *Mean Things Happening in This Land: The Life and Times of H. L. Mitchell, Cofounder of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union* (Montclair, NJ: Allanheld, Osmun & Co. Publishers Inc., 1979), 251–61.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 128–30; Jenkins, 157.

<sup>77</sup> "Teamsters Win Vote at DiGiorgio," *Sacramento Bee*, 25 June 1966, ASI series 7, 6:05.

<sup>78</sup> Ferriss, 130; Pycior, 351.

<sup>79</sup> Jenkins, 159; Ferriss 131–33.

<sup>80</sup> John W. Beckler and Ben Price, "Fight for People's Right to Know Nears Climax" *Times Union*, 12 June



- 1966, A11, Moss Papers 541:1; Herbert N. Foerstel, *Freedom of Information and the Right to Know: The Origins and Applications of the Freedom of Information Act* (London: Greenwood Press, 1999), 33–34, 41. For further discussion on the Freedom of Information Act, see Moss Papers, Boxes: 541, 545, 549, 552, 555, 560, 564, 565.
- <sup>81</sup> "Letter to Mr. J. W. Scollard," 3 August 1966, Moss Paper 102:19.
- <sup>82</sup> "Letter from Robert DiGiorgio," 17 November 1964, Moss Papers 335:40. Since the Federal Election Committee was not created until 1975 and Moss's files only contain letters of endorsement, no records of campaign contributions to the congressman exist for the period of 1965–1970. Furthermore, although no letter of endorsement from DiGiorgio can be found in the files, the powerful grower could have channeled such support through the various organizations with which he was associated—i.e., grower collectives and the Bank of America.
- <sup>83</sup> Kirse Granat May, *Golden State, Golden Youth: The California Image in Popular Culture, 1955–1966* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 171.
- <sup>84</sup> Quoted in Kurt Schuparra, *Triumph of the Right: The Rise of the California Conservative Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 118; Alfred Balitzer, ed., *A Time For Choosing: The Speeches of Ronald Reagan 1961–1982* (Chicago: Regnery Gateway Inc., 1983), 64.
- <sup>85</sup> "Reagan, In Elk Grove, Charges Brown Neglects Agriculture," *Sacramento Bee*, 15 May 1966, ASI series 7, 6:05.
- <sup>86</sup> "Reagan Blasts US Curb on Bracero Imports" *Sacramento Bee*, 2 June 1966; "Reagan Accuses Brown of Condoning US 'Experiment' In Cutting Braceros," *Sacramento Bee*, 15 September 1966, ASI series 7, 6:06.
- <sup>87</sup> "Farm Workers Say: Viva Pat Brown," *El Malcriado*, October 1966, ASI series 7, 6:02; Edmund G. (Pat) Brown, *Reagan and Reality: The Two Californias* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), 130. In a memoir account of the 1966 election loss to Reagan, Brown asserts that his absence on the Easter Sunday finale of the march was due to his prior family commitment for the holiday. Yet he never scheduled a meeting with Chavez afterward, which damaged his reputation and trust among Mexican Americans.
- <sup>88</sup> "Letters of Endorsement and Congratulations," 1966, Moss Papers 225:2A.
- <sup>89</sup> Moss Oral Interview, 32. In the interview, Moss recalls the political importance of having the "Union Label" as a Democrat—a label he carried personally throughout his career as a United States congressman. "Letters of Endorsement and Congratulations," 1966, Moss Papers 225:2A.
- <sup>90</sup> Alan Matthew Cahn, *Rethinking California: Politics and Policy in the Golden State* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2001), 29. In the election, Reagan defeated the incumbent Brown by almost one million votes. Besides racial unrest and the protests of the emerging counterculture, Proposition 13 also proved to be a reliable source of political fodder. In light of the California Supreme Court's invalidation of the initiative, which aimed at repealing the provisions of the Rumford Fair Housing Act (prevent bias in housing sales and rentals), many conservatives played on what they viewed as an assault on private property rights—i.e., the right to sell or lease one's property.
- <sup>91</sup> "Airtel memorandum from FBI Director to sacs in Washington and Los Angeles," 15 September 1966, *FBI Files* 161-4719.
- <sup>92</sup> For LBJ's use of FBI surveillance on activists in the 1960s, see Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam Books, 1987), 264–65; Terry Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties: Protests in America from Greensboro to Wounded Knee* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 180.
- <sup>93</sup> The first request for information on Chávez contained in the *FBI Files* is "Memo from Milton Jones to Cartha DeLoach," 8 October 1965, *FBI Files* 100-444762. The last is "Memo from Sacramento re: Chávez address in Merced," 11 August 1975, *FBI Files* 105-157123.
- <sup>94</sup> Ferriss, 138.
- <sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 139.
- <sup>96</sup> Jenkins, 164.
- <sup>97</sup> Ferriss, 139.
- <sup>98</sup> Gary Soto, *Jessie De La Cruz: A Profile of a United Farm Worker* (New York: Persea Books, 2000), 74.
- <sup>99</sup> Jenkins, 165.
- <sup>100</sup> Ferriss, 143–44.
- <sup>101</sup> Joseph A. Palermo, *In His Own Right: The Political Odyssey of Senator Robert F. Kennedy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 226.
- <sup>102</sup> Ferriss, 145; Jensen, 166.

- <sup>103</sup> Linda C. Majka and Theo J. Majka, *Farm Workers, Agribusiness, and the State* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982), 190.
- <sup>104</sup> Palermo, 248.
- <sup>105</sup> Quoted in Palermo, 130.
- <sup>106</sup> Rennert, A3. Moss actually expressed reservations about the war as early as 1967. See "Letter to Carl B. Strauss," 28 September 1967, Moss Papers 231:10.
- <sup>107</sup> Leo Rennert "Congressmen of Area Score RFK Candidacy" *Sacramento Bee*, 16 March 1968, Moss Papers 247:15.
- <sup>108</sup> "Letter from Mrs. John E. Dalton," 2 May 1968, Moss Papers 287:1.
- <sup>109</sup> "Letter to Mrs. John E. (Martha) Dalton," 7 May 1968, Moss Papers 287:1.
- <sup>110</sup> Majka, 95.
- <sup>111</sup> Ferris, 148.
- <sup>112</sup> "Grape Growers Urge Action against Boycott," *Los Angeles Times*, 24 June 1968, File LP236:484, Jesse M. Unruh Papers, California State Archives (hereafter, Unruh Papers).
- <sup>113</sup> Mooney, 163. See California Department of Agriculture Files: Director Correspondences—Grape Boycott F3741:1008–11; F3741: 1192–93, California State Archives (hereafter, Dept. of Ag. Files). The correspondences of Director Jerry Fielder to government officials, growers, and citizens provide a good synopsis of the department's slant and opposition to the UFW.
- <sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*; Taylor, 236.
- <sup>115</sup> Ferriss, 148.
- <sup>116</sup> "Hawaii State Legislature—Resolution of Support For Boycott of California Table Grapes," 14 October 1968, Dept. of Ag. Files F3741:1009; "Resolution From City Mayors Supporting Grape Boycott," 30 September 1968, Dept. of Ag. Files F3741:1008. For a brief history of agriculture in Hawaii and thus further insight into its support, see Meister and Loftis, 59–70.
- <sup>117</sup> Ferriss, 148.
- <sup>118</sup> Jensen, 168.
- <sup>119</sup> Ferriss, 149–50, 153, 155.
- <sup>120</sup> Majka, 188.
- <sup>121</sup> John Jacobs, *A Rage For Justice: The Passion and Politics of Phillip Burton* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997), xx.
- <sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, xxiii, 259, quote 75, 76.
- <sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 79. Burton taught Huerta how to mobilize Spanish-speaking voters into an effective lobbying force through letter-writing campaigns and by organizing groups to lobby directly at the Capitol. These techniques, used by the UFW throughout the boycott, continue to prove effective. Ferriss, 39, 43–47, 60–62. CSO was a Latino civil rights group co-founded by Fred Ross in the years following World War II. Ross recruited Chávez in 1952 and mentored the future labor leader in organizing strategies. Dolores Huerta joined the organization in 1956. Both Chávez and Huerta left CSO in 1962 to establish the NFWA and work full time in organizing farm workers.
- <sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 156, 158.
- <sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 199–200, 395. Although no written documentation of Burton's actions exists regarding the farm workers from 1965 to 1968, (an area ripe for examination) the congressman undoubtedly supported the union's efforts. Burton later commented that Chávez represented one of the only two people in the world of whom he stood in awe—the other was Ansel Adams (395).
- <sup>126</sup> Quoted in Pictor, 231.
- <sup>127</sup> Hubert H. Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man: My Life and Politics* (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1976), 320–29.
- <sup>128</sup> Marc Grossman, interviewed by the author by telephone, Rocklin, CA, 19 December 2005. Grossman, a UFW organizer for the past forty years, states that it is quite likely that Humphrey supported the union from the beginning but for one reason or another did not announce his support until 1968. However, Grossman stressed that no politician ever offered the kind of support that Robert Kennedy did.
- <sup>129</sup> Pictor, 232.
- <sup>130</sup> "Letters of Endorsement for 1968 campaign," Moss Papers 255:03; "Letters of Support and Congratulations for 1968 campaign," Moss Papers 287:15.



- <sup>131</sup> "Letters to California Growers Association, Glenco Forest Products, and State Box Company," 19 June 1968, Moss Papers 103:2.
- <sup>132</sup> "Government Violence," *Catholic Herald*, 17 October 1968, 4, Moss Papers 76:31.
- <sup>133</sup> "Letter to J. P. Sanders," 24 October 1968, Moss Papers 76:31. Considering that many were still battling against the Department of Defense for its mass purchases and exports of grapes to Vietnam in 1969, Moss's statement that the federal government had stopped such actions proved incorrect. Hearings were held in the summer of 1969 regarding the continued increase of purchases. See "Senators Question Defense Dept. Role in Grape Purchases," *Los Angeles Times*, 16 July 1969, Unruh Papers LP236:484. Since no legislation to end the DOD's excessive buying and exports of grapes is found in Moss's papers, the boycott's end most likely is what brought closure to the issue.
- <sup>134</sup> "Letter to Robert Breidenstein," 18 October 1968, Moss Papers 76:31.
- <sup>135</sup> "Letter to Lorna Lawson," 2 December 1968; "Letter to Don Erfert," 12 December 1968, Moss Papers 76:31.
- <sup>136</sup> "Letter to M. A. Clevenger, Executive Vice-President, Cannery League of California," 7 March 1969, Moss Papers 59:16.
- <sup>137</sup> "Moss, Legget Back Farm Labor Bill," *Sacramento Bee*, 10 March 1969. For Moss's 1969 Collective Bargaining Bill, see Moss Papers 57:15; 58:12.
- <sup>138</sup> Jacobs, 144. The author lists Moss among those Central Valley Democrats whose political interests and goals often conflicted with Burton's.
- <sup>139</sup> *California Statistical Abstract: 1968* (Sacramento: State of California Press, 1969), 77, 98, 103. In 1968, the number of farms in Sacramento County decreased by over six hundred while farmland in Kern County increased by almost 300,000 acres and supported eighty more farms than Sacramento. The newly expanded government bureaucracy, together with the growth of business, produced substantial white-collar growth in Sacramento County during the post-war era.
- <sup>140</sup> *Fight In The Fields: Cesar Chavez and the Farmworkers' Struggle*, produced and directed by Ray Telles and Rick Tejada-Flores, 115 min., Independent Television Service, 1996, Videocassette. Obtained at California State University, Sacramento Library.
- <sup>141</sup> "Letter to Attorney General John Mitchell," 9 July 1969, Moss Papers 252:14.
- <sup>142</sup> "Letter to State Senator George Deukmajian," 9 July 1969, Moss Papers 252:14.
- <sup>143</sup> James R. Mills, *A Disorderly House: The Brown-Unruh Years in Sacramento* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1987), 11, 75-76. Also see Lou Cannon, *Governor Reagan: His Rise to Power* (New York: Public Affairs, 2003), 163. A good portion of Cannon's book provides invaluable insight into the politics and actions of the assembly speaker and his relations with Governor Reagan. Unfortunately, the only references to the farm workers' strike and boycott are a brief sentence about Chávez and a footnote of Reagan's 1966 comment that the march to Sacramento was an "Easter egg-roll"—an ironic statement for one who would be called "The Great Communicator."
- <sup>144</sup> "Letter to Ronald Reagan," 5 September 1968, Unruh Papers LP236:533.
- <sup>145</sup> "U.C. Campus—Boycott on Grapes" *San Francisco Chronicle*, 5 October 1968, Unruh Papers LP236:533.
- <sup>146</sup> "Letter to Chávez regarding defeat of AB1657," 5 June 1969; "Letter to Bill Ketchum regarding AB1333," 17 July 1969, Unruh Papers LP236:84; "Statement to the Assembly regarding AB1209—Unemployment Insurance for Farm Workers," 23 April 1969, Unruh Papers LP236:509.
- <sup>147</sup> "Memo from Lew Paper," 21 August 1969, Unruh Papers LP236:509.
- <sup>148</sup> "Unruh Hits Sen. Murphy on Grape Negotiations," *Star News Independent*, 27 June 1969; "Unruh Criticizes Reagan and GOP Leaders for Inactivity," *Enterprise*, 17 July 1969, Unruh Papers LP236:534; "Unruh Campaign Speech—Reagan's lack of action," November 1969, Unruh Papers LP236:509.
- <sup>149</sup> Jenkins, 170-71.
- <sup>150</sup> "Letter from Lionel Steinberg," 1 June 1970, Moss Papers 76:31.
- <sup>151</sup> "Letter to Lionel Steinberg," 5 June 1970, Moss Papers 76:31.
- <sup>152</sup> "Shift in Attitude by Grape Growers to Unionism Seen," *Los Angeles Times*, 30 June 1970, Moss Papers 76:31.
- <sup>153</sup> Ferriss, 155-57.
- <sup>154</sup> Robert J. Carbaugh, *International Economics*, 9th edition (New York: South Western Publishing, 2004), 149.

# WHAT A WASTE

## Municipal Refuse Reform and a Century of Solid-Waste Management in Los Angeles

*By Adam Diamond*

### INTRODUCTION

Urbanization historically has increased the severity of waste-management problems as there is more waste produced per acre, and the growth of residential settlement makes it increasingly difficult to get waste “out of sight, out of mind” conveniently and cheaply. Industrialization compounds the problems of urbanization as rising incomes lead to greater production of waste per capita. In Los Angeles, rapid urbanization starting in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries led to the emergence of waste management as an issue of concern to municipal authorities. Later, as the metropolitan area dramatically expanded both geographically and in terms of population, the amount of waste produced escalated while the opportunities for easily disposing of it became fewer and further between. Municipal officials have constantly tinkered with new technologies, or new versions of old technologies, as they have sought solutions to this seemingly intractable problem of how to manage the discards of urban-industrial society without bankrupting the public treasury, inducing political rebellion, or causing intolerable environmental damage. The history of waste management in Los Angeles is a particularly clear-cut story of how urban growth continually undermines the capacity of local authorities to effectively address environmental externalities produced by urban-





Wilmington disposal dump used by the City of Los Angeles in harbor area.  
Truck dumps load as bulldozer spreads trash for compaction and cover, March 1957.  
*Unless otherwise noted, illustrations are courtesy of University of Southern California,  
on behalf of the USC Specialized Libraries and Archival Collections.*

ization and of how urban expansion creates sharp conflicts in land use priorities. Highly vocal and organized citizen action by residents living near waste disposal sites has forced waste managers to look farther afield to new hinterlands and to seek new technologies for accepting and processing waste—both expensive propositions. While doing so they must always be mindful of higher costs resulting from new, remote landfills or new waste-disposal technologies.

Starting with a short history of garbage and then focusing on solid-waste management in Los Angeles as a case study, this article analyzes varying ideologies of waste management and the evolution of practices in the twentieth century whereby the same methods for managing solid waste recur, albeit under different “solid waste regimes.” Rapid changes in political dynamics, land use, resource markets, and technologies have meant there has been no stable waste-management paradigm. Rather, municipal officials have had to constantly adapt to these changing circumstances and modify existing practices, sometimes leading to wholesale changes in how solid waste is managed for the sake of political expediency and/or fiscal responsibility. While waste disposal methods such as landfilling or burning waste have recurred throughout the twentieth century, this recurrence of methods at different historical moments has always been contingent upon specific circumstances unique to that time period. For example, early manifestations of burning garbage in backyard incinerators used very different technologies and operated in much different sociopolitical contexts than did later efforts to build waste-to-energy mass-burn incinerators; likewise, recycling has moved from being motivated largely by economic concerns in the early twentieth century to being a response to environmental concerns in the 1970s. This paper will explore the changing policies, objectives, and political dynamics that have driven solid-waste-management practice in Los Angeles over the past century.

#### A SHORT HISTORY OF GARBAGE

When looking at the history of garbage it is critical to recognize the genesis of the problem as we now know it. Disposal of garbage becomes a problem for society only with the establishment of permanent settlements, no matter their size—small, medium, or large. Prior to the rise of cities in the ancient and medieval world, nomadic populations faced no such problem. The low density of human populations in combination with their nomadic existence precluded the need for garbage management. Everything was left



to nature and the environment. In hunter-gatherer societies not only was there little in the way of manufactured inorganic waste, but unwanted material, primarily organic waste, was simply left on the ground to biodegrade as people moved from place to place.<sup>1</sup>

With the rise of urbanization, a more organized system of removing garbage from inhabited locales was required to ensure the orderly functioning of the settlement. The ancient Minoan civilization of Crete, 3000–1000 B.C., placed accumulated garbage in large pits with earth layered on top at regular intervals. In essence it was buried.<sup>2</sup> Ancient Troy relied on scavengers to take what they found useful and encouraged people leaving the city with empty carts to take a load of garbage with them. Julius Caesar, Roman ruler in the first century B.C., specifically exempted refuse carts from a ban on wheeled traffic within Rome during the day.<sup>3</sup> In essence, the ancient world set the model for subsequent centuries: bury your garbage or dispose of it as best you can—but get it out of town. It was readily understood that garbage was a by-product of life and the less of it around, the better. During the Middle Ages, the waste problem was not so severe as in more densely populated and hygienically oriented ancient Rome. Often urban residents simply threw their garbage out their windows into the street. But with increasing density, increasingly sophisticated techniques emerged to deal with the growing waste problem. Eventually it became well established that too much garbage accumulation in towns and cities would impede the flow of people and goods, and hence the very lifeblood of the city could be choked off.<sup>4</sup>

Municipal refuse reform became an important social movement and focus of government energies in the United States starting in the 1870s. Concerns about the sanitary evils visited upon urban populations by growing mounds of putrefying food waste and horse manure and the thousands of tons of waste dumped in oceans and rivers that often wound up washing back onto land led middle-class reformers to agitate for more comprehensive, efficient, and healthy handling of municipal waste.<sup>5</sup> Prior to this period, the collection and disposal of municipal waste was a haphazard affair with private householders usually responsible for disposal of their waste. Scavengers roamed freely to take their pick from garbage taken to local dumps as well as manure and dead animals that were left in city streets. Large cities such as New York, Boston, and Chicago had a particularly acute problem because of their combination of high density, high quantities of waste, and lack of dumpsites.<sup>6</sup>

New York became the leader in municipal refuse reform when Colonel George Waring, "the Apostle of Cleanliness," was appointed New York City Streets Commissioner in 1893 shortly after reform mayoral candidate William Strong defeated the Tammany Hall machine. Colonel Waring, who had a background in agriculture and engineering and had served in the Civil War, took to his new position with great passion and creativity. Waring was effective in developing technical solutions to waste collection and disposal that minimized health risks, improved the aesthetics of the city, and, perhaps most importantly, made resource recovery an essential component of waste handling/disposal policy.<sup>7</sup>

First and foremost, Waring saw resource recovery through separation of organic garbage, paper, ashes, and cans at the household level as critical to effective and economical rubbish disposal. Revenues gained from the sale of products from reduction plants, which cooked organic garbage to produce oils, fertilizers, and glues, would offset collection costs. Likewise, policy towards scavengers changed to maximize municipal revenues. Before Waring assumed office, New York had moved from initially paying people to scavenge, to letting people scavenge for free, to eventually charging people for the right to scavenge. Waring felt that even this last policy was too inefficient, as every dollar recouped by the scavengers was a dollar not going into city coffers to defray waste collection and disposal expenses. He banned the scavengers completely and started a city-owned, privately operated sorting plant with a conveyor belt carrying rubbish past two rows of pickers who removed different grades of paper, glass, and metal. Whatever was not extracted went into an incinerator, whose heat produced steam to generate electricity.<sup>8</sup> Such calculations of economic efficiency in designing waste-management techniques have proven pivotal in the changing waste regimes in New York and other cities such as Los Angeles.

#### HISTORY OF GARBAGE IN LOS ANGELES

In constructing a history of waste-management policy in Los Angeles, one is confronted by the dearth of primary and secondary sources regarding the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>9</sup> Part of this can be attributed to the later development of the city, which occurred after the huge wave of municipal refuse reform from the 1880s to the 1920s. The population of Los Angeles rapidly increased in these years, doubling from 50,000 to 102,000 in 1900, tripling in the next ten years to 319,000, and then almost doubling again to 577,000 in 1920. However, by comparison, New



York had 2.5 million people in 1890 and both Philadelphia and Chicago had over a million in 1890.<sup>10</sup> Robert Fogelson makes note of early concern about refuse problems in the town of Los Angeles in the mid-nineteenth century:

Los Angeles' inadequate sanitation also alarmed the Americans. The little waste left in the pueblo was easily disposed of on the farms, and the few visitors to the region rarely contaminated the community. But the town's larger populace and varied industries produced far more refuse and reduced the space available for its disposal.<sup>11</sup>

Fogelson's statement encapsulates one of the fundamental aspects of the relationship between urban growth and waste disposal: when populations are widely dispersed, waste disposal is not a nuisance or health hazard; the concentration of people and greater production of material goods that accompany urbanization and industrialization brings more waste and at the same time makes it harder to deal with.

When Los Angeles became a major city in the 1920s, the era of intense battles between urban political machines and Progressive reformers seeking to democratize and rationalize had largely passed. Fogelson cites the high proportion of native-born Americans and relatively small number of European immigrants as major contributing factors in the early demise of machine politics in Los Angeles.<sup>12</sup> Because waste reform in cities such as Boston, Chicago, and New York was linked to general municipal reform in the period from around 1880 to 1920, it had been a critical political issue in those cities.<sup>13</sup> In contrast, Los Angeles was a fairly small city in the early part of this period. Boston, Chicago, and New York had five, seventeen, and thirty-four times, respectively, the population of Los Angeles in 1900. Los Angeles' biggest boom years did not come until after the turn of the century.<sup>14</sup> Refuse was not a huge concern in these early years as the city was not very dense, and there was plenty of nearby open land, making disposal fairly easy in comparison to the densely populated eastern cities.

In 1892 more than two-thirds of Los Angeles voters approved a measure giving the municipality responsibility for refuse collection and disposal.<sup>15</sup> The city signed its first contract for the collection of organic waste from municipal residences in 1902. At the time, most combustible refuse was being burned in backyard incinerators. Serious efforts at resource recovery began in 1912 when the city contracted out to a private rubbish hauler to collect and dispose of noncombustible waste produced by house-

holds, i.e., glass, metal, and ceramics. These materials were to be separated by the householder before collection, making recovery easier. At this time collection was done by mule-drawn carts. Refuse that was not burned or recycled was dumped on open land near settled areas. At this early stage the metropolitan area was small enough that open land could be found fairly close to the point of generation. To further remove refuse disposal from residential areas and minimize possible nuisances, refuse collection was motorized in 1915. This change allowed waste to be carried farther from the point of generation.<sup>16</sup> In 1911 the city took over responsibility for collection and disposal of garbage (organic waste) and in 1917 assumed responsibility for collection of noncombustible refuse for most city residents.<sup>17</sup> Private collection was kept on in some outlying districts for efficiency's sake.<sup>18</sup> Householders continued to have responsibility for either burning combustible rubbish in a backyard incinerator or arranging collection with a private hauler. The city rubbish trucks did collect ash left over from burning combustible refuse.<sup>19</sup> Much of the combustible refuse that was collected privately and not burned in backyard incinerators, wound up being burned in open dumps; this practice continued for decades until smog became a serious concern in the 1940s.<sup>20</sup> Keeping disposal sites far away from urban settlement became an endless struggle as the Los Angeles region sprawled into previously agricultural areas.

Beginning in the 1920s, food waste was hauled on large gondola railroad cars to hog farms in eastern Los Angeles County, the San Fernando Valley, and San Bernardino County. It was collected twice a week to ensure its freshness for the hogs. The city received a significant amount of revenue in exchange for the garbage. This policy was both economical and convenient. Conservation of resources, *per se*, does not appear to have been a primary objective of feeding garbage to hogs; however, the fact that it reduced the need for land for dumping was a critical factor in the initiation and decades-long use of this method.

In 1943 the city extended municipal collection of organic and noncombustible waste to the entire city after private contractors serving outlying districts defaulted on their contracts starting in December of 1942 due to increased costs under wartime gasoline rationing. The city sold organic waste to hog farms for \$1 to \$1.75 per ton, salvageable refuse was sold to refuse contractors, and the remaining waste was dumped.<sup>21</sup> During the 1940s the City of Los Angeles had the largest hog-feeding operation in the entire United States. The hog farms with which it contracted sold more



than nine million pounds of pork annually from garbage-fed hogs.<sup>22</sup> Fontana Farms in San Bernardino County, which held a contract to buy garbage from Los Angeles for more than twenty-eight years starting in 1922, was at one time the largest hog farm in the world, with 60,000 hogs providing one-quarter of all the pork eaten in Southern California.<sup>23</sup>

However, hog feeding became an increasingly difficult waste-disposal strategy because of suburbanization encroaching on agricultural land. Neighbors protested strongly against the odor caused by hog farms. At the same time, there was concern that trichinosis from hogs would be passed along to pork consumers. Stricter regulations of hog farms were put into place. There was extensive experimentation with cooking the garbage to make it safer, and one study indicated that this allowed hogs to fatten up on less garbage; it took less cooked garbage than raw garbage to produce a pound of pork.<sup>24</sup> But cooking garbage was expensive and urban expansion made livestock operations on the urban fringe increasingly untenable. In 1951 Fontana Farms, which had been taking 500–600 tons of garbage daily from Los Angeles, amounting to 71 percent of the total collected, went out of business. Its contract was split up among five smaller operators in the Saugus-Newhall area.<sup>25</sup>

Seeing the end in sight, waste managers began looking at other solutions, with under-the-sink garbage grinders becoming one of the most popular alternatives to feeding hogs waste. Beginning in the 1950s many newly constructed homes included garbage grinders. Several Southern California cities passed ordinances requiring the installation of garbage grinders in new homes. Although Los Angeles did not pass such an ordinance, garbage grinders certainly caught on as shown by the fact that the average amount of organic garbage collected per capita decreased every year from 1951 to 1960. Total collection went down one-fourth of a pound per person per day. Waste managers and sewage engineers calculated that it was easier and cheaper to dispose of garbage in this manner than to landfill it and that this method was more viable in the long run than hog feeding.<sup>26</sup>

At the same time that increased urbanization was making hog feeding less viable, it was also making backyard incineration very problematic. Since the mid-1940s the City of Los Angeles and other Southern California cities had been looking for alternatives to open burning and backyard incineration of combustible waste, due to the smog caused by smoke and the Los Angeles region's unique inversion effect, which traps air pollu-



Junior Army salvage workers with the salvage they collected in 1942.  
The scrap was recycled into ammunition for the war effort.  
*Herald Examiner Collection, Los Angeles Public Library.*

tion.<sup>27</sup> In 1947 the Los Angeles County Air Pollution Control District was organized, and shortly thereafter its staff started examining alternatives to the burning in rubbish dumps and 400,000 backyard incinerators then estimated to be in operation. A plan was made to build several large-scale incinerators in different parts of the city. Several other Southern California cities had municipally run incinerators, including Santa Monica, Signal Hill, Pomona, Beverly Hills, and Glendale, starting as early as the late 1930s and running into the early 1960s. Such incinerators were considerably cleaner than the backyard variety and were actually touted as part of





A residential incinerator burning trash, July 1, 1957.  
*Herald Examiner Collection, Los Angeles Public Library.*

the solution to Southern California's air-pollution problem.<sup>28</sup> Complementing the move to municipal incineration, in 1955, the Air Pollution Control District for Los Angeles County, eight years after its formation, moved to ban all backyard incinerators. The smooth implementation of this ban was delayed, however, because of concern over cities' ability to quickly develop collection capacity for combustible rubbish that had previously been burned in backyards and because of the problem of racketeering in the waste-hauling and dumping industry.

Former mayor of Los Angeles Norris Poulson recounts in *Who Would Have Ever Dreamed?* his dealings with waste racketeers over the transition from backyard incineration to the municipal collection of rubbish.<sup>29</sup> A private rubbish hauler notified Poulson that he had been asked to join a "combine" run by large dump owners, large rubbish haulers, and Teamsters Local 396. This combine, or racket, was conspiring to put all of the small operators out of business and in the process drive up prices through monopolistic control. To avoid becoming beholden to this monopoly the city was obliged to undertake municipal collection of combustible refuse. However, it was not ready to implement such a large collection program so quickly, and this required an extension of the enforcement of the ban on incinerators. The hauler agreed to secretly tape his meeting with the racketeers. Poulson used a special provision in the city charter allowing the mayor to call hearings and subpoena witnesses in order to blow open the issue and thus both build support for an extension of the incineration deadline and for the delay in city rubbish collection. He made public the tape of the meeting, leading to a perjury conviction of teamster official Frank Matula. The city council tried to obstruct implementation of municipal rubbish collection by putting it to a popular vote. Opponents called municipal collection "socialistic," but the measure won handily due to a concern over the possible formation of a destructive private monopoly on city rubbish collection. The County Board of Supervisors applied the deadline on the incineration ban to the whole county. To complement the municipal collection of rubbish, publicly owned dumps were to be established by the county for use by all municipalities.<sup>30</sup>

The pressure on landfills increased not only due to the ban on backyard incineration but also as feeding garbage to hogs decreased and the population boomed. Additionally, municipal incineration gradually fell out of favor as it was expensive and unreliable. Los Angeles, which had two municipal incinerators in 1958, closed them down by 1964.<sup>31</sup> Feeding





Lacy Street Incinerator with new trucks in foreground, April 1957.

garbage to hogs was eventually stopped completely by the City of Los Angeles in 1961 due to the lack of suitable locations for hog farms within a reasonable distance of the garbage-generation points. At the same time that feeding garbage to hogs was being phased out, the viability of salvaging was decreasing as well. Interestingly, Los Angeles kept separating its metals out for salvage long after most other municipalities in the area had gone to combined collection and disposal in which mixed refuse composed of rubbish and garbage was put out by householders for collection and sent to landfills or municipally operated incinerators.<sup>32</sup>

Starting in the 1940s, other Southern California cities had begun to switch to combined collection for economy's sake, as the added collection costs for separate collection were no longer justifiable.<sup>33</sup> A 1963 City of Los Angeles report on salvage states:



Mayor Norris Poulson carries the rubbish fight to a Teamster Union convention in 1955, warning delegates against condoning acts of union officials Frank W. Brenster (*left*) and John Anand, who differed with the mayor on the issue. *Herald Examiner Collection, Los Angeles Public Library.*

Since the turn of the century the cost of removing salvage from refuse has increased directly proportional to the cost of labor. . . . The markets for salvage products are generally decreasing due to improved technology and competition from industrial by-products. Except for war periods, the value of salvage materials has continuously declined. The price of a few items such as rags, metals and corrugated paper has held above the norm in some areas due to the efforts of the individual salvage companies in generating a uniform supply at competitive prices.<sup>34</sup>

The lower prices for salvage materials, primarily tin cans at that point, made separation of refuse a major issue in the 1961 mayoral race between



incumbent Norris Poulson and challenger Sam Yorty. Charges went back and forth about poor service, mismanagement, and connections to organized crime. Yorty campaigned on the populist promise that he would end separated collection of refuse in Los Angeles, thus saving housewives the dreary work of separating out materials for salvage. Yorty calculated that the \$50,000 per year that the city received for its tin cans worked out to only two cents per housewife per month. Yorty accused Poulson of "forcing Los Angeles housewives to perform 'coolie labor' for a salvage firm."<sup>35</sup>

Yorty won the election and successfully implemented the combined collection of household refuse starting in 1964. While time savings was the great advantage of combined collection, it presented a new problem that would in the coming years haunt the city—what to do with the burgeoning amount of waste? At the time this policy of combined collection was implemented in Los Angeles the contemporary environmental movement had yet to become widespread, and there was little concern among government officials or the public at large with the conservation of natural resources. Through the 1960s waste management continued to be looked upon as a technical problem of how to dispose most efficiently of large quantities of materials that had no inherent value. If the market failed to place an adequate value on these materials, then they were only something that needed to be put "out of sight, out of mind." There seemed to be plenty of relatively close-in landfill space for the city's trash in the Santa Monica Mountains, the San Gabriel Valley, and the San Fernando Valley. In 1964 city-collected rubbish destined for landfills traveled an average distance of thirteen miles to its disposal site. In comparison, metals for private salvage traveled an average distance of twelve miles. At this point rubbish was dumped at private, city-owned, and Los Angeles County Sanitation District landfills.<sup>36</sup> In prior decades when refuse was collected by mule cart this would have seemed an interminable distance, but with motorized collection this was not unreasonable.

However, the city's policy of expanding landfill capacity to solve waste-management problems became increasingly difficult to implement as time passed, and residents who lived either near existing sites slated for expansion or proposed new sites organized and vociferously opposed expansion and construction of new landfills. The local emergence of the NIMBY phenomenon ("Not In My Backyard")—manifested in strident opposition to landfills or incinerators—was in many ways a reemergence of the same kind of community opposition in the 1940s and 1950s to hog farms. Just as communities had agitated for closure of local hog farms on the grounds of their

Mayor Poulson testifying at the State Building before a committee holding hearings on rubbish. *Herald Examiner* Collection, Los Angeles Public Library.



being a nuisance and health hazard, so did residents surrounding existing or proposed landfills organize against them using similar arguments about dangers to health and their being a nuisance. In the interim, greater scientific knowledge, easier access to technical information, and the general emergence of environmental social movements gave added effectiveness to the anti-landfill forces that emerged in the 1970s.<sup>37</sup>

During the 1970s residents of the toney neighborhoods of Brentwood and Bel-Air, near the Mission Canyon landfill located in the Sepulveda pass within the city limits, organized to stop its expansion. This site, composed of eight separate canyons, was one of the main disposal sites for the Los Angeles County Sanitation District (LACSD). While Mission Canyon did not take trash directly from the City of Los Angeles, but from other



municipalities in the county, any constraints on its future use posed a problem for the City Bureau of Sanitation in terms of finding more disposal capacity within a relatively short distance of waste-generation points. If other cities could not dump there that meant other landfills used by the city would be under additional pressure to handle more waste.

The county had stopped dumping in Canyons 1 through 3 in 1965 after it received permission to start disposal operations in Canyons 4 through 7 from the City Planning Commission. The LACSD intended to save the additional capacity in Canyons 1 through 3 for later use. After heavy pressure from neighbors, the City Planning Commission in 1977 and 1981 refused to allow the LACSD to reopen Canyons 1 through 3 for additional waste disposal. The neighbors had expressed concern over contamination of ground water from leachate—water polluted with various toxic chemicals from refuse—leaking from the landfill and the harmful methane the landfill vented because of decomposing organic matter. Mission Canyon was shut down completely in 1982 by the Los Angeles City Council.<sup>38</sup> Even though it was run by the county, since it was within the boundaries of the city, the city council had authority to shut it down. Around the same time other community struggles emerged over potential landfill sitings in the city, including Toyon II in Griffith Park and La Tuna Canyon in the Verdugo Hills area near the 210 Freeway, and the expansion of Puente Hills landfill in Hacienda Heights. The two main landfills accepting Bureau of Sanitation-collected waste—Sunshine Canyon, in Granada Hills just outside the city limits, and Lopez Canyon, in Lakeview Terrace within the city limits—were projected to reach capacity by the mid- to late 1980s. The city's closing of dumps that had been accepting waste from outside jurisdictions, namely the LACSD, meant that other municipalities and the county were less willing to accept waste from the City of Los Angeles.<sup>39</sup>

In the late 1970s, due to the increasing difficulty of finding new places to dump city trash, the Bureau of Sanitation began looking at alternatives to landfilling municipal waste. Instead of examining all possible options carefully, the bureau quickly settled on a solution to a looming "garbage crisis"—mass-burn incineration. Recycling was dismissed due to technical and economic constraints and the perception it would be difficult to get residents to participate at a high rate in municipal recycling programs.<sup>40</sup>

The bureau then released a proposal for the LANCER (Los Angeles City Energy Recovery) project that called for the construction of three 1,600-ton-per-day waste-to-energy mass-burn incinerators around the city to take



The low dumping fees as county-operated dumps was illustrated by *Herald Examiner* reporter Slaten, who paid two dollars at a privately operated dump to dispose of a nineteen-pound load of paper cartons that could have been left at a county-operated dump for a charge of fifty cents. (1957?)





Group of fifty protesting at a hearing on a dump, February 25, 1960.

care of almost all waste collected by the Bureau of Sanitation. At this point the city was responsible for collecting waste from all single-family dwellings, apartment buildings with four or fewer units, and city operations including airports, harbors, and parks and recreation. Through these various collection points the bureau directly handled almost 50 percent of all municipal solid waste generated within the city limits.<sup>41</sup>

According to the bureau, LANCER not only would have taken care of the city's trash, but it also would have generated electrical power that could be sold to the city-owned Department of Water and Power, defraying operating expenses of incinerators. It seemed to be the "magic bullet" that city sanitation officials had been searching for, that would take care of the city's trash woes for decades to come. However, this proposal to burn the city's waste soon foundered as community opposition mounted and cost estimates skyrocketed.

In 1985 the city council approved the Final Environmental Impact Report for LANCER I, which was to be located on Alameda Street in South Central Los Angeles. The strategy of placing the first incinerator in a primarily African American and Latino neighborhood envisioned that wealthier areas in the San Fernando Valley and West Los Angeles would find it difficult to oppose incinerators in their neighborhoods if a poorer neighborhood populated by people of color were already hosting an incinerator. It would have been a clear case of racial and class discrimination if these wealthier and whiter areas were able to avoid the responsibility of hosting an incinerator after one had already been sited in South Central Los Angeles. An even more cynical aspect of this strategy allowed that it would be easier to site an incinerator in an economically depressed and primarily African American area because residents would be happy to have the jobs and would have fewer resources to mount an effective opposition campaign.<sup>42</sup>

Over the course of the next two years, this strategy was shown to be misguided and ineffective. Community opposition formed in the wake of the city council's decision to greenlight the project. A group called Concerned Citizens of South Central took the lead, joined by other community groups and environmental groups from across the city, in opposing the LANCER project on racial, economic, technical, environmental, and public health grounds. CCSC made powerful alliances with other groups in other parts of the city, and one of the galvanizing arguments for the opposition revolved around the environmental racism of building a noxious facility in



a minority neighborhood that already bore a multitude of environmental burdens.<sup>43</sup>

To neutralize the opposition, Mayor Thomas Bradley and Gilbert Lindsay, the councilman in whose district the project would have been built, established a \$10 million "community betterment fund" to pay for neighborhood improvements, essentially attempting to bribe the residents. This strategy failed, and the opponents were able to defeat the proposed incinerator, primarily focusing on the nuisance that hundreds of trucks carrying waste and ash would cause as well as the health hazard posed by the emissions from the plant. The project economics were targeted as well; the DWP had agreed to subsidize the operation of the plant by buying its power at an above-market rate, providing a \$1 million annual subsidy. Also, the estimates for the cost per ton kept escalating as new analyses were done; the March 1986 estimate of \$27.43 per ton increased to \$34.83 in January 1987, then \$45.54 with the inclusion of ash-disposal costs, and finally up to \$56.89 per ton in April 1987. This made the project much more costly than current tipping fees (money paid to landfill owners for dumping trash) of \$13–20 per ton, and even pricier than long distance rail-haul.<sup>44</sup>

In 1989, as projects like LANCER failed and additional landfills became almost impossible to site, the California legislature passed Assembly Bill 939, mandating landfill diversion rates of 25 percent and 50 percent for 1995 and 2000, respectively, for all municipalities in the state. Spurred on by the passage of this law and the siting problems, the city achieved a landfill diversion rate of 40 percent for 1996. Most of this was attributed to recycling, with a small portion coming from source-reduction measures. While this represented a tremendous advance in the way the city dealt with its waste, the highly volatile markets for recyclable materials and an inadequate capacity for processing of materials nearby remained problems. For example, the price of recycled newsprint fluctuated between \$45 and \$250 per ton between 1991 and 1996. This price volatility made long-term business projections difficult and at times led to the landfilling of materials that were collected as recyclables.<sup>45</sup> Along with mandates for diversion, a series of reporting requirements was imposed on jurisdictions by the state with the passage of AB939 in 1989. It required all cities and counties to draw up a Source Reduction and Recycling Element which was to include a Solid Waste Generation Study and a plan outlining diversion strategies, such as residential or commercial recycling, technical assistance to businesses to foster source reduction, and composting workshops.

The passage of AB939 meant that Los Angeles now had no choice but to aggressively pursue recycling. However, when LANCER was defeated the city had already prepared to move in this direction. The Bureau of Sanitation started citywide recycling in 1989, before AB939 went into effect. For the first few years after the passage of AB939 the Bureau of Sanitation had some breathing room. First, recycling planning and implementation had a jump start with the citywide diversion rate standing at 20 percent in 1990, almost all in the commercial and industrial sectors. Second, because Lopez Canyon, the city-owned landfill in Lake View Terrace, was still open, refuse disposal was still fairly inexpensive compared to what other cities had to pay. However, this situation changed dramatically with the closure of Lopez Canyon in July 1996. Local community activists blocked the extension of the landfill's operating permit by enlisting the support of Councilman Richard Alarcon and taking the city council to task for threatening to renege on its promise not to seek another extension of the five-year permit granted in 1991. The threat of a failed promise resonated strongly with the community and many council members. However, with the closure of Lopez Canyon, the city was now completely dependent on privately owned landfills. While the tipping fees of \$22 per ton the city paid the Bradley and Sunshine Canyon landfills in Sun Valley and Granada Hills, respectively, were still fairly low, this was the case only because the contracts had been negotiated when Lopez was still open and the city had more bargaining power. The city had been taking most of the 3,560 tons collected daily by the Bureau of Sanitation from single family residences and apartment buildings with fewer than five apartments citywide to Lopez Canyon.<sup>46</sup>

When Lopez closed it had about five years of capacity remaining. It was estimated that the early closure would cost the city upwards of \$50 million (in additional tipping fees paid to the private landfills that took city-collected trash) more than what it would have cost to use Lopez Canyon for the remainder of its design life.<sup>47</sup> Before Lopez closed, the Bureau of Sanitation prepared a Solid Resources Action Plan in 1993, which laid out strategies for dealing with the solid waste after Lopez closed. This plan laid out several scenarios for moving away from dependence on landfill disposal, including expanded public education, improved recycling and diversion efforts, and innovative technologies as alternatives to landfill disposal. While not marking a dramatic break from plans laid out in the Source Reduction and Recycling Element and the city's long range Solid Waste Management Policy Plan, the Action Plan was meant to provide a short



term answer to the difficulties caused by the closure of the last city-owned landfill.

The closure of Lopez Canyon and the defeat of LANCER are both examples of effective citizen action forcing the city to look hard at the solid-waste system and to develop alternative ways of dealing with waste. The pressure on landfills pushed solid-waste managers towards recycling as it had become more difficult to find adequate nearby landfill capacity. It also provided an economic incentive to expand source reduction and recycling efforts as the reduction in the number of landfills and closure of publicly operated ones such as Lopez Canyon had driven up landfill tipping fees. Thus, in Los Angeles, as in many other California cities, the drive to recycle has been spurred not only by AB939 but also by high landfill tipping fees and community opposition to expanded or new landfills.

In Los Angeles the cost of collecting solid waste has historically constituted over 90 percent of total solid-waste-management system costs for the Bureau of Sanitation, with disposal costs accounting for the remaining 10 percent. This balance changed radically between 1981 and 1992 as the cost of disposal skyrocketed due to landfill shortages and stricter regulations that raised the cost of landfill operation. For fiscal year 1991–1992, disposal costs accounted for 40 percent of total system costs, with collection costs accounting for the other 60 percent. This increase was a result of limited supply, stricter environmental regulations, and increased reliance on private transfer and disposal facilities. Overall collection and disposal costs per ton have increased somewhat since 1985 because of the gradual decrease in the tonnage handled by the Bureau of Sanitation, with fixed costs staying relatively constant.<sup>48</sup>

This increase in solid-waste-management system costs has spurred a search for more cost-effective methods that also meet the requirements of AB939. Rising disposal costs suddenly made recycling and other waste-management techniques more viable financially as they did not have to compete with low tipping fees previously enjoyed by Los Angeles.<sup>49</sup> For example, if landfilling had been the low-cost waste-disposal option at \$22 per ton to dump, it would no longer have been the low cost option if landfill tipping fees had increased to \$30 or \$40 per ton.

In the 1990s, while the increases in landfill tipping fees led to expanded recycling efforts, other market forces served to impede recycling. Because the industrial economy is built around the extraction and transformation

of raw materials for use in manufacturing, the market favors virgin materials over recycled materials much of the time.<sup>50</sup> Economies of scale are greater, supply chains are well established, and material costs are lower. To compound matters, customers often demand particular specifications that only products made from virgin materials can meet. As a result, the prices paid to recyclers are often very low compared with the cost of collection and fluctuate due to factors such as the health of local, national, and international economies, sudden shortages caused by operational problems at distant plants, or new recycling capacity coming on line.

### CONCLUSION

Since the landmark closure of the last city-owned landfill in Los Angeles, waste diversion and recycling rates have improved dramatically. The landfill diversion rate went from 15 percent in the second half of 1994,<sup>51</sup> to 60 percent in 2000, and the city has set a goal of 70-percent diversion by 2020.<sup>52</sup> Key to achieving the 60-percent diversion rate has been the largest yard trimming collection and composting program in the United States—possibly the world. Considering that more than 20 percent of all municipal solid waste in Los Angeles in 1995 consisted of yard trimmings, it was critical to find a way to divert this material from landfills. Materials collected through the program are taken to four composting facilities outside the city, including one in the San Joaquin Valley where the trimmings are mixed with sewage sludge collected from the city's Hyperion sewage-treatment plant, composted, and turned into TOPGRO (a garden mulch), which is sold to area farmers and gardeners in the city.<sup>53</sup>

It is important to note that the same geographical forces noted earlier with dumps, hog farms, and incinerators are manifest in the composting program. The city simply cannot dispose of or process its waste within its own borders. If there were uninhabited areas and transportation costs were not an issue, this would not be a problem. But in a densely populated state like California and, in particular, the enormous and continually growing megalopolis that is greater Los Angeles, there is no place that at least some people do not hold near and dear to their hearts. The city's waste must be sent elsewhere, but elsewhere is someplace someone else calls home. A poignant example of this phenomenon is the battle over Eagle Mountain. The old Kaiser Steel company created the Mine Reclamation Corporation to turn its Eagle Mountain mine in Riverside County into a huge landfill that would take 700 million tons of waste over its 100-year lifespan, taking



in 20,000 tons daily, mostly from Los Angeles County, brought by as many as two hundred trucks and six trains daily. The company thought that here was an old mine in a remote area that could be put to good use taking L.A.'s trash. The only problem with this plan is that this particular mine is right next to Joshua Tree National Monument. Toxic leachate from the landfill would threaten endangered species living in the park. Since it was first proposed in 1991 a battle has raged pitting local environmentalists opposing the project and Eagle Mountain's sponsors against the county officials who have approved the project.<sup>54</sup> Once again, an attempt to put waste "out of sight, out of mind" by sending it to the hinterland has been undermined by the growth of the metropolis and increased environmental consciousness.

Within the city this same dynamic has recurred with equal intensity in the last decade as the city has continued to struggle to find landfill space for waste that cannot be recycled or composted. Just as the residential neighbors of Lopez Canyon held local politicians' feet to the fire for years, so have neighbors of Sunshine Canyon and Bradley landfills—in Granada Hills and Sun Valley, respectively—been pressuring city officials to close these waste-disposal facilities.<sup>55</sup> With all of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation's collected waste going to Sunshine Canyon Landfill in Granada Hills, the city again was confronted with difficult choices that were the result of political pressures and previous missteps in solid-waste-management planning. Browning Ferris Industries (BFI), owner of Sunshine Canyon, over stiff opposition from neighboring residents, has dramatically expanded the landfill, moving from county land into the city limits years after the initial portion of the landfill located within the city closed down. Greig Smith, the Los Angeles City councilman whose district includes the city portion of the landfill, has been outspoken in his opposition to plans by the city to continue to dump its waste there for years to come. Before joining the city council he was active for years in the North Valley Coalition, which has vigorously opposed the landfill through political pressure and lawsuits. This coalition has opposed Bureau of Sanitation use of the landfill, access to the county portion (after the old city portion closed in 1991) from roads located within the city, and city approval to expand back to within the city limits.<sup>56</sup> The main alternative to continuing to dump Bureau of Sanitation waste at Sunshine was to have the waste collection and disposal company Waste Management build a transfer station at Bradley landfill—which currently takes privately collected waste from the city and municipally collected waste from other municipalities—and send the waste by tractor trailer to dumps in the Antelope Valley and Riverside County. This option

evaporated when Waste Management withdrew its proposal, accusing city officials of dragging their feet and not being sincere.<sup>57</sup> Seeing no other options, the Los Angeles City Council Budget and Finance Committee voted in June 2005 to continue dumping Bureau of Sanitation-collected trash for another five years at Sunshine Canyon.<sup>58</sup> This came in the wake of the city's final approval of BFI's plans to move back into the city and operate for twenty-five more years, allowing the existing landfill to double in size and continue to handle waste from either municipalities or private waste haulers.<sup>59</sup> In August 2005 the whole city council voted 8-4 to delay a final decision on whether to approve the five-year renewal of the Bureau of Sanitation's contract with Sunshine Canyon, a week after a 7-4 vote in favor of renewal failed to get the absolute majority of eight votes required for passage.<sup>60</sup> The outcome of this issue is unclear as of this writing.

In this last instance political opposition to landfills operating within the urban milieu has come dead set against the tremendous need to find additional waste-disposal space, even with much higher waste-diversion rates. As the city continues to grow, it searches for new waste-disposal policies in a seemingly Sisyphean struggle to remain one step ahead of itself. The mountain of waste produced by the urban conglomeration must find a home, but potential waste reservoirs are increasingly surrounded by schools, houses, businesses, and other material signs of urban development. The political opposition engendered by such proximity of people to trash impedes waste managers from making full use of available disposal facilities. Just as hog farms gave way to suburban housing tracts and incinerators were blocked or closed down for polluting the air Angelenos breath, so have landfills been closed as houses encroach on their borders. Urbanites want their waste to go "out of sight, out of mind," but the extension of the urban footprint increasingly makes this task impossible. The forces of urbanization that produce large volumes of waste have created and continue to create political, geographic, and economic constraints to its orderly disposition.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> William Rathje and Cullen Murphy, *Rubbish: The Archaeology of Garbage* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001), 32-33.

<sup>2</sup> David Gordon Wilson, "History of Solid Waste Management," in *Handbook of Solid Waste Management*, David Gordon Wilson, ed. (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1977), 1; Judd Alexander, *In Defense of Garbage* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993), 1-2.

<sup>3</sup> Diane Favro, *The Urban Image of Augustan Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 76.

<sup>4</sup> William Rathje, "History of Garbage," *Garbage: the Practical Journal for the Environment* 2 (September 1990): 33.



- <sup>5</sup> See George E. Waring, Jr., "The Death-Rate of Memphis," letter dated March 11, 1882, *The American Architect and Building News* 11 (March 25, 1882): 142–43, reprinted in Howard P. Chudacoff and Peter C. Baldwin, eds., *Major Problems in American Urban and Suburban History* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2005), 153–54. Waring describes how only some of his recommendations for improving sanitation in Memphis after the 1878 cholera epidemic were carried out.
- <sup>6</sup> Craig E. Colten, "Chicago's Waste Lands: Refuse Disposal and Urban Growth, 1840–1990," *Journal of Historical Geography* 20 (2): 126.
- <sup>7</sup> Martin Melosi, *Garbage in the Cities: Refuse, Reform, and the Environment*, revised edition. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), 48–49. See Waring, 154 for dramatic pictures of New York's Fifth Avenue before and after Waring's appointment as sanitation commissioner in 1895.
- <sup>8</sup> Daniel Thoreau Sicular, "Currents in the Waste Stream: A History of Refuse Management and Resources Recovery in America," (master's thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1984), 26–43.
- <sup>9</sup> Robert Fogelson, *The Fragmented Metropolis: Los Angeles, 1850–1930* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), 78.
- <sup>10</sup> As a measure of comparison, Martin Melosi's landmark study of the history of garbage in the United States—*Garbage in the Cities: Refuse, Reform, and the Environment*—has thirty-four references to New York in its index, compared to five for Los Angeles.
- <sup>11</sup> Fogelson, 26.
- <sup>12</sup> Fogelson, 211.
- <sup>13</sup> Larry Luton writes, "Waring saw his crusade to clean up the city as going beyond sanitizing the streets and into improving the physical and social environment of the city. Such an improvement, he and other progressives believed, would result in a healthier body politic." Larry Luton, *The Politics of Garbage: A Community Perspective on Solid Waste* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1996), 91.
- <sup>14</sup> Fogelson, 78.
- <sup>15</sup> Fogelson, 34.
- <sup>16</sup> L.A. Resource Program. *Phase I: Report on Existing Conditions* (City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Sanitation, 1989), I-1.
- <sup>17</sup> "To Help Combat Smog: Los Angeles Embarks on City-Wide Collection of Combustible Refuse with Fleet of 178 New Vehicles," *Western City*, May 1957, 36.
- <sup>18</sup> Winston R. Updegraff, "Collection and Disposal of Garbage and Refuse in California Cities," *Western City*, October 1943, 27.
- <sup>19</sup> Winston W. Crouch and Wendell Maccoby, *Sanitation Administration in the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area: A Study in Development of Public Policy and Administrative Organization* (Bureau of Government Research: UCLA, 1952), 79.
- <sup>20</sup> "Incineration of Rubbish Recommended For Los Angeles Metropolitan Area," *Western City*, August 1945, 25.
- <sup>21</sup> Winston R. Updegraff, "Collection and Disposal of Garbage and Refuse in California Cities," *Western City*, October 1943, 27.
- <sup>22</sup> Crouch and Maccoby, 70–77.
- <sup>23</sup> Fontana Historical Quilt. <http://score.rims.k12.ca.us/activity/quity/pigs/htm>. Accessed June 21, 2005.
- <sup>24</sup> "Garbage Disposal By Feeding It Raw To Hogs On Way Out in California," *Western City*, July 1954, 51, 64.
- <sup>25</sup> Winston R. Updegraff, "Municipal Garbage Feeds 10,000 Hogs," *Western City*, April 1952, 44–45.
- <sup>26</sup> K. S. Watson, "Solving Community Garbage Problems by the Use of Disposers," *Western City* 40 (April 1964), 36–39.
- <sup>27</sup> "Incineration of Rubbish Recommended," 25.
- <sup>28</sup> Crouch and Maccoby, 90–91; Randall M. Dorton, "Santa Monica To Have New 300 Ton Incinerator Under Lease Plan," *Western City*, March 1951, 33; "Pomona Incinerator Goes Into Operation Next Month," *Western City*, June 1951, 45; Winston R. Updegraff and Richard Bartle, "Refuse Collection in 156 California Cities," *Western City*, August 1949, 24.
- <sup>29</sup> Norris Poulson, *Who Would Have Ever Dreamed?* (compiled under the auspices of the Oral History Program, UCLA, 1966), 275–93.
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 279–91.
- <sup>31</sup> Winston R. Updegraff and Frances Bowerman, "Refuse Collection and Disposal in 194 Western Cities," *Western City*, May 1958, 36; Lester A. Haug and Stanley Davidson, "Refuse Collection and Disposal Practices in 118 Western Cities," *Western City*, May 1964, 25.
- <sup>32</sup> *Summary of Refuse, Salvage and Reclamation Study and Research Program on Residential Refuse Collected by the City of Los Angeles* (City of Los Angeles: Department of Public Works, Bureau of Sanitation, 1963).

- <sup>33</sup> Updegraff and Bartle, 31–34; Lester A. Haug and Stanley Davidson, “Refuse Collection and Disposal Survey Indicates Changing Trends in 118 Western Cities,” *Western City*, April 1964, 26–35; Sanitation Districts Staff, “Refuse Disposal Plan is Proposed For 39 Cities in Los Angeles Area,” *Western City*, September 1955, 47.
- <sup>34</sup> *Summary of Refuse, Salvage and Reclamation Study*, 1.
- <sup>35</sup> John C. Bollens and Grant B. Beyer, *Yorty: Politics of a Constant Candidate* (Los Angeles: Palisades Publishers, 1973), 119.
- <sup>36</sup> Haug and Davidson, “Refuse Collection and Disposal Practices in 118 Western Cities,” 30.
- <sup>37</sup> Melosi, 187, 210–11. Robert Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring: the Transformation of the American Environmental Movement* (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1993), 264.
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- <sup>40</sup> Robert Gottlieb and Louis Blumberg, *War On Waste: Can America Win Its Battle with Garbage* (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1989), 161.
- <sup>41</sup> *Source Reduction and Recycling Element: Executive Summary* (Los Angeles: Integrated Solid Waste Management Office, 1993), ES-1.
- <sup>42</sup> Gottlieb and Blumberg, 165–73.
- <sup>43</sup> Robin Cannon, President, Concerned Citizens of South Central, personal communication, February 28, 1997.
- <sup>44</sup> Gottlieb and Blumberg, 165–73.
- <sup>45</sup> Jeanne Beesley, Sean Heron, and Bill Pitkin, “The Recycling Sector in Los Angeles: Prospects for Economic Development” (Unpublished paper, UCLA Department of Urban Planning, 1996), 4, 20.
- <sup>46</sup> Mark Miodovski, Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation, personal communication, April 29, 1997, and Richard Hastings, Environmental Deputy for Los Angeles City Councilman Richard Alarcon, personal communication, February 5, 1997.
- <sup>47</sup> Christopher Westoff, General Counsel to the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, personal communication, April 29, 1997.
- <sup>48</sup> L.A. Resource Program, *Solid Waste Management Policy Plan, Phase IV* (City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation, 1993), 9-1 to 9-5.
- <sup>49</sup> From 1981 to 1992 the average amount paid per ton of garbage disposed of by the Bureau of Sanitation increased from \$2.85 per ton to \$26.52 per ton. *Ibid.*
- <sup>50</sup> Community Environmental Council/Gildea Resource Center, *City of Los Angeles Recycling Based Economic Development Strategy*, January 1997.
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- <sup>57</sup> Wendy Thermos, “Plan to Ship Waste to Remote Sites Dropped,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 25, 2005, B3.
- <sup>58</sup> Steve Hymon, “City Panel OKs Renewing Sunshine Dump Contract,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 22, 2005, B9.
- <sup>59</sup> Kerry Cavanaugh, “Deal Would Wean City Off Dump: Activists Seeking to Hold Politicians to Their Promises About Sunshine,” *Los Angeles Daily News*, June 19, 2005, N4.
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# THE HISTORIAN'S EYE

*What does an historian notice in a photo from the past?*

V-J Day, August 14, 1945! We envision a snow of paper from office windows, strangers kissing in the streets, bells ringing, horns honking. But the end of the war also signaled massive layoffs and Southern California's war plants were especially hard hit:

August 15: California Shipbuilding Corporation at Terminal Island fired 3,500 workers.

August 17: Los Angeles area aircraft plants laid off 7,050.

By September 26, a total of 158,228 Southern California workers had been let go.

Historians have fixed a spotlight on Rosie the Riveter and Wanda the Welder, symbols of the many women who worked in California's shipyards and aircraft plants. Between August 1943 and April 1945 women constituted 32 to 33 percent of the industrial workforce in Los Angeles County. The layoffs did not just affect women, as our focus on them has led us to believe. By March 1946 women still constituted 26 percent of the county's factory workers.

The man in this photo, carting out his tool box past women still at their drill presses, was only one of millions of men and women whose lives were in turmoil at the end of World War II. Eleven million service men and women returned to the U.S. or soon would. Renewing marriage partnerships, parenting children born while their fathers were away at war, a severe housing shortage—and then the layoffs just when returning G.I.s were ready to compete for jobs: how many households were experiencing stresses like these in the fall of 1945? To appreciate just how this man and so many others understood their situation, we must remember that every adult in 1945 had experienced the Great Depression.

As it turned out, employment numbers started to rally in October, fed by an unprecedented demand for consumer goods. But what turbulent times for a generation that experienced the depression, the war, and social and economic upheavals in rapid succession!



Layoff after V-J Day, Douglas Aircraft, Long Beach  
from the *Los Angeles Daily News* Collection 1387 (78:33763.2).  
Courtesy Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.





# Book Reviews

“THIS SMALL CITY WILL BE A MEXICAN PARADISE”: *Exploring the Origins of Mexican Culture in Los Angeles, 1821–1846*. By Michael J. González. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005. 245 pp. \$22.95, paperback.) Reviewed by María Raquél Casas.

Within Spanish Borderlands historiography the impact of Mexican independence on its inherited northern settlements has consistently been a point of argument. Many historians have argued that due to their remote locations, settlements like New Mexico, Texas, and California were little affected and that the distance between these northern areas and Mexico City allowed for a distinctive pattern of settlement with only nominal connections between the capital and its northern neighbors. Thus, northern frontier settlements developed specific local identities in isolation from one another. Hispanos in New Mexico, Tejanos in Texas, and Californios in California continued to live their lives as they had under Spanish rule with local elites ruling over these remote settlements. In “*This Small City Will Be a Mexican Paradise*,” Michael J. González challenges this point and provides a highly engaging revisionist history by focusing on one particular place, Los Angeles, and stressing its political, ideological, and cultural attachments to Mexico. In his work he suggests, “[M]ost angeleños felt attached to Mexico. Clearly, there lived some angeleños and californios who felt hostility. But to issue qualifications and words of caution may render meaningless any point we make. There is more reward, and more reason, to say that Mexico seemed quite popular with the angeleños” (p. 16).

What follows is a wonderfully researched history of nineteenth-century Mexican Los Angeles. Posing interesting new questions and introducing new areas of research, González’s work is clearly not just a local study but a helpful addition to nineteenth-century Mexican American history. González opens each chapter with the same document: a petition penned on February 19, 1846, by twenty-six signers, including resident Angeleños and several foreigners, asking the California governor, Pío Pico, to discipline the Indians. González then interprets the multiple meanings and multi-layered ideas contained within the petition. By providing such a deep reading of this specific document (easily overlooked by a less-experienced historian) in relation to the changing world of the Californios, and by conducting such impressive archival research, González clearly shows the richness and depth of nineteenth-century California history. González’s intellectual rigor indicates that if one is willing to pay attention and listen to the voices and conversations embedded in nineteenth-century Spanish-language archives, a richer understanding of these communities can be written. Picking out six words in the document, “Indians,” “work,” “excesses,” “same,” “beneficial,” and “exterminate,” González thoughtfully unpacks the concepts and meanings of these words and



provides a rich social and cultural study of Mexican Los Angeles. This close textual reading reveals, according to the author, "how the angeleños acquired, and applied, any idea about Mexico. For instance, the petitioners complained that the Indians 'encouraged' the angeleño populace to abandon good sense and indulge the body's appetites. In this word, 'to encourage,' we hear an unspoken question: If not the Indians, then who should 'encourage' angeleño conduct? To seek encouragement would suggest that the petitioners sought, and wished to imitate, certain individuals. Mexico we would think, as might Mexicans and Mexican ways, could have supplied the examples that most angeleños wanted to emulate" (p. 26).

A political urban history of Los Angeles is a welcome addition to the growing historiography of nineteenth-century California, and, at times, this work provides fruitful insights to the intellectual underpinnings of *some* Californios; however, precisely because Mexico is so rarely mentioned in many archival texts, the burden for González is to pinpoint how, and in what way, Californios thought about and understood Mexico (or the many Mexicos) developing in the nineteenth century. The author also does not quickly establish the importance of Los Angeles as "the city" to Angeleños until pages 68 through 71; nor does he explain why he omits a discussion of other California towns and how Los Angeles compared to these other sites. González's ability to speak of a unified Californio identity is thereby called into question because it is unclear if city building was uniquely significant to a developing Angeleño identity or to other Californios as well. Because the history of early nineteenth-century California is dominated by the development of the rancho system and the growth of *rancheros'* political power, this urban focus is refreshing.

One of the main arguments of this book is that liberal ideas played important roles in shaping Los Angeles: "Into the angeleño soul—our soil—went the liberal seed. The seed contained a copy, or better, an imprint of the ideal person conceived by liberals in the nation's center" (p. 148). The author, however, fails to support or frame this and other key points in the book because he does not adequately discuss the secondary literature or the historiographical importance of his argument. For example, in discussing the Californio relationship with Mexico, the author makes little distinction between the capital and its environs, thereby implying that a cohesive nation-state had emerged; however, even the author often undermines his own argument by acknowledging that very few Angeleños had ever even been to Mexico City. Had the author provided more information on developing Mexican cultures and society, and thus turned away from our United States-centric approach to Borderlands history, this work would more deeply resonate and provide new paths of inquiry into the study of nineteenth-century California. As it is, this work seems to float atop the many historiographical topics that make up nineteenth-century California history. While it is rich in archival research, one should not dismiss the fact that the author's lack of engagement with the secondary literature makes this book difficult to place. Because the author does not provide a bibliography for the secondary works he references, it is difficult to assess how he is advancing the historiography of the field.

Overall, Michael J. González has provided a valuable interpretive study of nineteenth-century Los Angeles. His fresh approach to the subject matter, impressive archival research, and largely sound observations should encourage further nineteenth-century urban studies, particularly the role Mexican Americans played as they, like other settlers, tried to create their own paradise.

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**CALIFORNIA: A History.** By Kevin Starr. (New York: The Modern Library, 2005. 370 pp. \$24.95, cloth.) Reviewed by Janet Fireman.

While reading the book, and as I began writing, I wondered if this review could convey the psychic and intellectual heft of this one-volume history of California. According to Kevin Starr's admitted proclivity for lengthy narrative, this is a mini-volume, but in this case, size does not matter since its foundation is Starr's decades-long dedication to the *Americans and the California Dream* series.

Surely some will quibble and carp that Starr celebrates California too much; that his modern language usage rests too heavily on words such as "matrix," "epicenter," and "exfoliate"; that the dream metaphor has been overworked; and that Josiah Royce's wisdom and prescience are given too much credit. Let them think what they will, for Starr—who is our most comprehensive thinker about the state's past—makes a stunning case for "how California came to be such a representative American place" (p. xiv) by the first decade of the twenty-first century. He has chosen a most welcome and ambitious theme, developed with astonishing insight and estimable grace.

If the California Dream series demonstrates that Kevin Starr is surely the most widely read and most skilled California interpreter of the past, then this book demonstrates his success in processing that enormous historical bounty and marketing it to a national audience in compact form. Rolling out his theme, Starr devotes particular attention to issues in the past (such as ethnic identity and immigration) that have special relevance today but maintains an incredibly broad sweep through the past's corridors while divulging many juicy details on diverse subjects. One of these is Agoston Haraszthy's 1861 shipping of 200,000 European grapevine cuttings "around the Horn to California, the most delicate of them placed in raw potatoes submerged in water" (p. 111). All of Starr's focal points reflect on the state's impact, for better or for worse, as he says, on the nation. The author observes: "There has always been something slightly bipolar about California. It



was either utopia or dystopia, a dream or a nightmare, a hope or a broken promise—and too infrequently anything in between.” But now he sees hope in the promise that California’s strengths and blessings provide for its people and for the nation, as Josiah Royce saw 120 years ago. Now, Starr believes, Californians are coming to grips with the imperfections of their Golden State and, in fact, the faults in the American dream. Inspiringly, he expresses the hope for “a place, a society, in which the best possibilities of the American experiment can be struggled for and sometimes achieved” (p. 344).

The body of the book is packed. Within the chronology, Starr contextualizes art, literature, journalism, architecture, landscaping, geology, water resources, and more. In short, everything surrounding the open-eyed twenty-first-century person is there. For the new reader of California history, or for those who know only the mission myth, Disney’s California Adventure, and movie versions of the past, the alarm clock is set for a great awakening. And for cognoscenti, there are treasures of perception and observation laid out lovingly and artfully: Starr’s erudition in the multiple literatures of California sparks enthusiasm, hunger, and desire to read more.

Starr’s *California* is loaded with many other benefits, even if you think a whole-state history is not your cup of tea. For example—and this is no mean feat—there are many accomplished generalizations and overview passages, such as a succinct encapsulation of writing in the first half-century of American California that is prelude to our own times:

The literature of California in the 1850s was characterized by humor, history, and memoir; in the 1860s, by local color, literary journalism, and poetry. The 1870s witnessed a continuation of these genres, with an added emphasis on nature writing, closely connected to geology, together with the economic essay as practiced by Henry George and at least one instance of investigative reporting. In the late 1870s and 1880s there ensued an efflorescence of historical writing, promotional literature, and the first instances of long fiction, as opposed to the sketch or short story (p. 139).

No one-note humanistic snob, Starr freely peppers his prose with remarkable and revealing statistics, such as the fact that the busiest intersection in the United States in 1924 was Adams and Figueroa, where 69,797 cars passed (p. 185). In discussing “a certain millenarian tendency that surfaced in California during these stress-laden years” of the Depression, Starr notes that “by the early 1930s, roughly one third of the 150,000 residents of Long Beach were over the age of sixty. Never before in human history had there been so many elderly people in one place at one time vis-à-vis the total population” (p. 212). Additionally, a wry observation that “in 1945, Nixon had been a somewhat rumples lieutenant reviewing contracts for the military (and) by 1954, he was vice president of the United States” (p. 243) speaks loudly for the postwar transformation of California and the nation. Describing native California autodidact mechanic and inventor John Montgomery’s 1883 gull-winged glider flight, Starr’s attention to detail and his transforming it to interpretation carries us aloft: “It was the first recorded heavier-than-air flight in human history, and it took place in California. It also confirmed something essential about the Golden State: that air travel—as engineering, as science, as metaphor, and as dream—was totally commensurate with the California identity.

Over the next century, aviation would shape California, and California would shape aviation" (p. 253).

Starr's chapter entitled "O Brave New World! Seeking Utopia Through Science and Technology" delivers an outstanding interpretation of the natural world modernized by California-bred technology, and the state's "search for utopia through science and technology" with its earmarks of being "open, flexible, entrepreneurial, [and] unembarrassed by the profit motive" (p. 247). Starr's recounting of these exceptional accomplishments—and their fascinating back-stories—by themselves command jaw-dropping awe and admiration. Together with the rest of a marvelously adept and rewarding romp through the state's history, Kevin Starr proves that he owns California's historical canon like no other writer, whether expressed in the long form of eight or nine volumes, or just this little slim jim-dandy tome of a cool 350 pages.

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RAMONA MEMORIES: *Tourism and the Shaping of Southern California*. By Dydia DeLyser. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005. 256 pp. \$18.95, paperback.) Reviewed by Hillary Jenks.

The booster and the tourist are key figures in Southern California's historiography, playing starring roles in seminal works by, among others, Carey McWilliams, Kevin Starr, Mike Davis, William Deverell, and Phoebe Kropp. These scholars have analyzed the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century packaging, sale, and consumption of California attractions ranging from climate to Hollywood glamour to the so-called Spanish fantasy past. A romanticized version of the region's Spanish and Mexican eras emphasizing lavish fiestas, dark-eyed señoritas, and an idyllic, pre-modern way of life, the Spanish fantasy past flowered in Southern California from the 1890s through at least the 1940s in the form of pageants, plays, mission and adobe restoration, regional literature, films, and mission revival architecture, all aimed at actual and potential tourists. Dydia DeLyser, assistant professor of geography at Louisiana State University, adds to this scholarship with *Ramona Memories: Tourism and the Shaping of Southern California*, her examination of Helen Hunt Jackson's 1884 novel *Ramona* and its effect on the landscape and social memory of Southern California. An interdisciplinary work combining cultural geography, history, and literary analysis, *Ramona Memories* "examines the impact of a person who never existed, the powerful significance of fictional places, and the commemoration of a past that, though partly made up, was and is deeply felt in southern California" (p. ix).

DeLyser has two goals in this study: to explore the ways in which *Ramona* shaped landscape and social memory in Southern California and to recover the historical agency of the tourists who visited the factual sites associated with the fictional *Ramona*. Building on the work of scholars such as Maurice Halbwachs, Marita Sturken, James Fentress, and Chris Wickham, DeLyser contends that social (or collective) memories



are stories about the past that people use to make sense of their present and to define their shared membership in a group. Importantly, these memories need not be objectively "true" to be meaningful for those who share them, allowing fictional pasts (like that of *Ramona*) to enter social memory alongside historical ones. If, as DeLyser claims, "landscape is one of social memory's most powerful conveyors" (p. xv), then it is perhaps not surprising that tourists arrived in California seeking the real-life locations that had inspired their beloved novel, creating a new landscape of *Ramona*-related sites across Southern California. DeLyser points out, for instance, that readers visited the adobe of the Estudillo family, which seemed to match the description of *Ramona's* marriage place, for twenty years before enterprising boosters restored it and added elements from the novel and a souvenir shop. In dynamically determining and claiming such sites, as well as incorporating elements from the novel into their own travel narratives, she argues, tourists showed that they were not "simple-minded dupes . . . who were easily lured to phony *Ramona* sites" (p. xii), as some scholars have maintained, but "actively took part in producing a new social memory for the region" (p. 173).

The book begins with two strong chapters that lay out the historical context for Helen Hunt Jackson's writing of *Ramona* and for the development of tourism in Southern California. Jackson famously intended the novel to be an *Uncle Tom's Cabin* for California's Indians; DeLyser examines how *Ramona's* plot, characters, and especially genre—regional fiction—undermined Jackson's aim and instead generated "a nostalgic glance back at the Californio and Indian cultures that once had been" (p. 18). Citing the work of T. J. Jackson Lears and Marguerite Shaffer, DeLyser then describes how the intersecting developments of increased leisure time, affordable travel by rail and automobile, and the publication of guidebooks and promotional materials made possible the creation of a new shared action—domestic tourism—that cemented American middle-class identity, with postcards as the material means of communicating and enacting that identity. The following seven chapters (one of them only three pages long!) then describe emplaced and embodied elements of Southern California's *Ramona* landscape, from her "home" at Rancho Camulos, to the *Ramona* pageant at Hemet, to the putative "real *Ramonas*." Unfortunately, the analysis of landscape and social memory is generally marginalized in these chapters.

DeLyser effectively grounds the development of regional identity among Anglo-American residents and tourists in Southern California in shared texts and acts, and the book's major contribution is its emphasis on the practices and interpretations of the tourists and newcomers themselves rather than the manipulations and promotions of boosters. The readers of *Ramona* (almost compulsively) recreated the landscape in the novel's image, and the pilgrimages to these *Ramona* sites produced a shared memory and analysis of California's past. However, the book's strength—its attention to the individual tourist creating a meaningful relationship to place through the sites and souvenirs of mass tourism—is also its greatest flaw, as it keeps DeLyser focused on the upper- and middle-class Anglo-Americans who developed this shared regional identity. As a result, not enough attention is paid to the consequences of a *Ramona*-based social memory for Indian and Mexican Californians. At only one point in the study, DeLyser's discussion of the "real *Ramona*," *Ramona Lubo*, in chapter seven, does the cost of the *Ramona* myth for these populations become fleetingly clear. An Indian woman who, like the *Ramona* of

the novel, had witnessed the murder of her husband Juan Diego, Ramona Lubo's factual history was subsumed within the fictional narrative of *Ramona*: even she and her husband's headstones read "Ramona" and "Alessandro," their "real lives . . . virtually erased to allow the fiction of the novel to flourish" (p. 133). The poignancy of this moment makes the reader long for a more sustained treatment of Indians' and Californios' own creative responses to the exploitative power of Anglo-American *Ramona*-philes.

An interesting companion piece to *Ramona* in the classroom, and potentially appropriate reading for undergraduates in California history if paired with a work such as Lisbeth Haas's *Conquests and Historical Identities, 1769–1936*, *Ramona Memories* is nevertheless a rather narrowly focused work that would have benefited from a more expansive approach and a more consistently sustained engagement with the theoretical groundwork of social memory and landscape analysis.

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**PRISON WORK: A Tale of Thirty Years in the California Department of Corrections.** By William Richard Wilkinson. Edited by John C. Burnham and Joseph F. Spillane. (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2005. 199 pp. \$25.00, paperback.) Reviewed by Volker Janssen.

This memoir of William Richard Wilkinson, whose career as a guard in California's Department of Corrections spanned thirty years, contains "much wisdom concerning how to handle convicts," as the editors John C. Burnham and Joseph F. Spillane promise on the back cover. At a time when daily news about one of the world's largest prisons systems highlights the desperate need for a new sense of purpose and reform, this publication seems especially pertinent. The perspective of a prison guard who saw the rise and fall of California's system of therapeutic rehabilitation between 1951 and 1981 should stir up particular interest. The preferred protagonists of prison historians have been progressive reformers, brutal wardens, or resilient prisoners, but rarely their rank-and-file keepers. For that reason alone, Burnham and Spillane make an interesting contribution to the history of the penal institution.

Some of Wilkinson's stories suggest that it's not just the guards who make the prison, but prisoners too. Trading contraband, brewing moonshine, making weapons out of toothbrushes—there is always more to prison life than prison rules. Yet, while Wilkinson has some gripping anecdotes to share, the more common challenge seems to have consisted of fighting routine and boredom. Paid to ensure that "nothing happens," guards—like prisoners—often did nothing but "time." In fact, *Prison Work* suggests that inmates and their keepers had more things in common than their institutional roles imply.



Whether Wilkinson's thirty years in prison serve as "wisdom" or as a warning is unclear. An advocate of rehabilitation, he started out at Chino prison under the famous penologist Kenyon Scudder, who insisted on a prison without walls and instead showed new arrivals how to jump the fence to impress upon them the privilege of their minimum-security status. Frowning at the mere warehousing at San Quentin and Folsom, Wilkinson fondly recalls the productive atmosphere in Chino's vocational shops and on its farm and shares his own examples of gaining the prisoners' cooperation with wit, not violence. Other memories of what "worked like a charm" are less progressive, however. Light-heartedly, he tells the story of subduing a prisoner by "hold[ing] him down and tear[ing] the clothes off him" and "march[ing] him up the main hall of the institution naked" (p. 11). In the wake of Abu Ghraib, this technique is unlikely to impress readers as wise.

The 1950s at Chino were Wilkinson's "good old days." Staff was "one big happy family" (p. 34), and guards enjoyed authority "next to Superman" (p. 23). The recognition of prisoners' human and civil rights in the 1960s, however, curtailed this power and expanded prisoners' contact with the outside. As a result, Wilkinson's recollections of his work at Vacaville and Soledad prisons during the latter sixties and seventies sound increasingly bitter: "It ganged up on us: all the television sets, all the civilian clothes, all the telephones, all the banquets, all the radios, all the non-censoring of mail" (p. 100). Much to Wilkinson's regret "this emancipation thing" (p. 102) even denied guards the right to "control inmates by making their lives miserable" (p. 75). For example, the court-ordered renovation of Soledad's old isolation unit prevented guards from denying prisoners water and basic hygiene: "[W]e had to tear the cells up and put plumbing in all of them. It ruined perfectly good lock up cells" (p. 150). Prisoners simply had "too much freedom," such as the "outlandish" and "absolutely asinine" conjugal visits, which were meant to keep prisoners' families together. Close to mutiny, Wilkinson promised his supervisor "to screw it all up before it [was] all over" (pp. 109-11).

Readers may be even more shocked to find that Wilkinson was one of the more moderate guards who strictly rejected the militancy of the emerging prison guards union, the California Correctional Peace Officers Association. Although openly sexist, he was more accommodating to women in the workplace than others were. He resented the department's affirmative action policies towards minorities as much as those towards women. But he also acknowledged the open discrimination his nonwhite colleagues suffered in small-town prison communities. And he recognized the Muslim Brotherhood as a legitimate organization and—in contrast to most guards—gained its adherents' trust.

Wilkinson's recollections permit a wide range of observations about the nature of the rehabilitative regime in the postwar welfare state. The problem with *Prison Work* is that Burnham and Spillane do not actually offer any such interpretations. Instead, the editors insist on the integrity of their subject's memoir and offer this account only to "stimulate further research and investigation." They provide fifteen introductory pages with some background on the Department of Corrections and a brief historiography. Their footnotes offer little more than clarifications of fact. However genuinely modest this restraint may be, it also makes *Prison Work* less a work of history than raw material for future scholarship. Sources simply do not speak for themselves, and the editors' silence on the many historical questions raised by Wilkinson limits the importance of

this work. Still, historians ought to be grateful for such candid and unrestrained shoptalk. Unwittingly, this memoir suggestively points to the ways in which white working class resentment emerged out of the very structures of the postwar liberal state of which California's Department of Corrections was an integral part.

Wilkinson only seems conflicted about one question—what to make of his life's work. "I never did seem to get my feet on the ground," he concludes, but hastens to add that "mostly it turned out pretty well" (p. 159). It seems that Wilkinson's ambiguity about his legacy matches our own uncertainty about what to learn from the rise and fall of rehabilitative corrections.

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WHERE WE ARE NOW: *Notes from Los Angeles*. By D. J. Waldie. Foreword by Patt Morrison. (Santa Monica, CA: Angel City Press, 2004. 206 pp. \$16.95, paperback.) Reviewed by Sandy Zipp.

In his first book, *Holy Land: A Suburban Memoir*, D. J. Waldie delivered a wholly original and unprecedented piece of nonfiction. One part history, one part memoir, and one part prose poem, *Holy Land* told the social and personal history of Lakewood in a series of spare and unadorned vignettes. The book suggested, against all received judgments and outside observers, that there was a soul at the heart of postwar suburbia.

Waldie's latest collection of essays ranges over wider ground, taking in the entire Los Angeles region. Here he muses on subjects as disparate as water, energy, municipal politics, crime, public transit, Catholicism, and the life of downtown as well as suburban Los Angeles. At first glance, *Where We Are Now* also seems to diverge from its predecessor's quiet appreciation for suburban subtleties, hewing closer to the well-known litany of complaints and regrets about life in the midst of Southern California sprawl. Wandering beyond his own native square-footage, Waldie finds a familiar Los Angeles, one ushered into modernity by "a sales-pitch," (p. 15) perpetuated by a "pyramid racket" called the California Dream, and divided by race, class, and an inhospitable built environment (p. 11). But patient readers will find the Waldie of Lakewood and *Holy Land* in these essays as well, sifting through the cynicism and hard truths alike to find a redemptive and collective vision of a Los Angeles lived as a collection of neighbors, not strangers.

Waldie does not shrink from Los Angeles' precarious present. He has a knack for pithy summations of the city's predicaments: it is "a metropolis that has only edges," a "city of edited memories," and "a place that likes to tear itself apart" (pp. 13–14). He also knows its bitter history. The city's troubles cannot, he says, be blamed only on sprawl: "The Los Angeles we have was the conscious product of the Progressive Era's proselytism of social hygiene in segregated suburbs, the thirty years of federal housing



policy based on segregated single-family homes and the years during World War II during which working class houses like mine were concept-marketed to working-class buyers like my neighbors" (p. 156). One result of this past has been a spirit of civic indifference fed by what he calls "a hundred fifty years of unresolved fears about race and class in Los Angeles and thirty years of 'taxpayer revolts' against the idea of a common good that has substituted a loose federation of unrelated self-interest groups for the idea of a city for everyone" (p. 16). The fact is that for "the vast majority of Angelenos, the place they inhabit is a row of suburban houses on a grid of streets reaching its human and environmental limits" (p. 14). And yet this dark history and troubling future appear to Waldie as a kind of tragic opportunity: "Looking back, Los Angeles is the paradise we've ruined and, as a consequence, is now our home" (p. 15). The "fate" of the metropolis, he hopes, is not to end in ruin and dissolution but "to finally become a real city, now that it's stopped being mostly a roadside attraction" (p. 20).

Waldie locates the source of his hopes in the same place he finds himself. For him, the usable past is not the mythic California Dream of unlimited whites-only sunlight, space, and water but the more particular post-World War II "working class longing for the dignity that comes with a house, a yard and," most important to Waldie, "the company of neighbors" (p. 169). Waldie still lives in the house in Lakewood that he grew up in and that his parents bought in 1946. This long tenure in a place so many consider transitory and alienating is evidence to him of suburbia's draw. "Despite everything that was ignored or squandered in its making," he writes, referring to its racial exclusions and environmental problems, "I believe a kind of dignity was gained. More men than my father have said to me that living here gave them a life made whole and habits that did not make them feel ashamed" (p. 48). Here, as in *Holy Land*, Waldie emerges as the Jane Jacobs of the postwar suburb, recognizing "the play between life in public and life in private . . . choreographed by the design of Lakewood" (p. 48). Living close together in mass-produced houses on standard lots, Waldie suggests, offers lessons in neighborliness, humility, and urbanity. "With neighbors just fifteen feet apart, we're easily in each other's lives in Lakewood," he writes (p. 49). He and his neighbors "think of themselves as ordinary people who've taken up the protracted burdens of conviviality" (p. 158).

Many of the essays in this collection turn on the notion that Los Angeles' only hope is for the entire city to embrace the lessons of Waldie's Lakewood. Up until now the region's "anti-urban domesticity" depended on perpetuating "carefully planned suburban distances" (p. 125). Now, however, there is no more space. The city is built out; it has reached its physical and social limits. The city's future depends upon recognizing and confronting its own urbanity. What Los Angeles needs, Waldie suggests, is a collective civic bearing of the "protracted burdens of conviviality" (p. 158). He offers this verdict most explicitly in an essay on the San Fernando Valley secession crisis. Condemning secessionism as a "cowardly" and "vulgar" response to the challenge of living together, he charges that it "reduces 'citizenship' to cocooning and turns 'city' into enclave" (p. 167). To accept secession, he declares, is to deny the city's true history and live its marketing. Instead, he says, "Los Angeles requires courage to extend one's moral imagination across its whole, flawed, tragic, sacred, human and humanizing body. Because it finally asks this courage of its citizens, Los Angeles is finally the necessary city" (p. 170).

At times, Waldie seems like a lonely voice crying out in a freeway-ramp and mini-mall wilderness. His essays on cars and public transit are among the most moving and extraordinary in the volume because he does not drive, takes the bus everywhere he goes, and still loves Los Angeles. Sometimes it seems that only someone with such a skewed, roadside vision of the freeway city could hope to imagine that the city would be redeemed by conviviality and close-grained urbanity. Most Angelenos appear resigned to the fact of Waldie's darker realizations: they live in a city that "offers little that stands against the easy conviction that no shared loyalties are possible at all" (p. 164). But Waldie's genius lies precisely in his fervent belief that Angelenos can and must develop shared loyalties and a common story. As he says in a masterful essay on Mike Davis, that other great chronicler of Los Angeles life and politics with whom he has shared origins and interests but a divergent temperament, "To believe that no story can stand against the catastrophe that is L.A. would be L.A.'s ultimate disaster" (p. 161).

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## Other Recent Publications

Each season, the *Southern California Quarterly* receives more books than it can find space to review. Here is a selection of wide-ranging titles available in the interrelated fields of Southern California history, the American West, Environmental Studies, and the Borderlands that might interest our readers.

THE ANZA TRAIL AND THE SETTLING OF CALIFORNIA.  
By Vladimir Guerrero. (Berkeley, CA: Heyday Books, 2006. 240 pp. \$16.95, paper.)

Published as part of Heyday's *California Legacy* series, *The Anza Trail and the Settling of California* offers first-hand accounts of the 1775 journey of 240 men, women, and children from the present-day border between Arizona and Mexico to the site that would become San Francisco. This interracial and international band of people led by American-born Spaniard Juan Bautista de Anza, Father Francisco Garcés, a Spanish priest, Salvador Palma, chief of the Yuma nations, and Sebastian Tarabal, a Native American guide, pioneered an early overland route through California and established a settlement colony near San Francisco Bay. The author, Vladimir Guerrero, has reconstructed what are, in fact, two expeditions, using the personal travel journals of Anza, Garcés, and Father Pedro Font. The result of Guerrero's accessible and readable translation is a lively historical narrative that fills in experiential gaps for scholars of eighteenth-century California. Moreover, the book is wonderfully appropriate for undergraduate history classes as an example of both primary sources and historiographic choices.



HISTORY MAY BE SEARCHED IN VAIN: *A Military History of the Mormon Battalion*. By Sherman L. Fleek. (Spokane, WA: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 2006. 414 pp. \$37.50, cloth.)

During the United States–Mexico War, there was one religious unit: the Mormon battalion. Author Sherman Fleek restores the military role to this battalion, which has commonly been seen instead as a pioneering group of settlers. A traditionally written military history, Fleek's prose brings to life first-hand accounts drawn from soldiers' diaries, journals, and memoirs.

CALIFORNIA: *An Illustrated History*. By Robert J. Chandler. (New York: Hippocrene Books, 2004. 252 pp. \$14.95, paper.)

This short introduction to the history of California offers traditional fare such as the missions, the gold rush, the railroads, and the emergence of the major industries: oil, automobiles, and aerospace. It is deeply condensed and ignores contemporary scholarship on the complex culture of California and its representation in a broader American and transnational imagination. For the non-academic reader who is visiting California for the first time, this text offers light reading and an accessible chronology of basic historical knowledge.

SAN DIEGO: *California's Cornerstone*. By Iris Engstrand. (San Diego, CA: Sunbelt Publications, 2005. 312 pp. \$19.95, paper.)

It is remarkable that with the prolific outpouring of scholarship on Los Angeles in the past fifteen years there has been little academic attention paid to its nearby urban neighbor, San Diego. Two recent correctives are Phoebe Kropp's *California Vieja: Culture and Memory in a Modern American Place* (University of California Press) and Matthew Bokovoy's *The San Diego's World's Fairs and Southwestern Memory, 1880–1940* (University of New Mexico Press), both of which address the city's role in creating Southern California's aestheticized history of colonial conquest and racial inequity. The uninitiated reader of this rich new literature, however, would be well served by also reading a thorough introductory history of San Diego, and this is what Iris Engstrand has helpfully provided. An expert in San Diego history, Engstrand offers a highly readable synthetic history of the city, providing useful contextual detail for both academic and non-academic readers.

SIX-GUN SOUND: *The Early History of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department*. By Sven Crongeyer. Introduction by Lee Baca, Los Angeles County Sheriff. (Fresno, CA: Craven Street Books, 2006. 250 pp. \$18.95, paper.)

Reviving the image of early Los Angeles as a town of bandits, debauchers, and exiled Mexican criminals in need of law and order, Crongeyer depicts a culturally diverse and growing city into which Anglo sheriffs and their deputies stepped with rifles at the ready. This is not a critical social history but a chronicle of the first fifty years of

the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department told in the tradition of the classic American Western drama.

**GATEWAYS TO SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA: *Indian Footpaths, Horse Trails, Wagon Roads, and Highways*.** By John W. Robinson. (Arcadia, CA: Big Santa Anita Historical Society, 2005. 488 pp. \$69.95, cloth.)

This beautifully illustrated text offers a thoughtful and well-written history of Southern California's traveled landscape. Familiarizing readers with the various mountain ranges that traverse the region, Robinson explains that "they form an imposing bulwark separating the coastal plains and valleys from the interior arid lands. They protect these seaward lowlands from the harshness of the Mojave and Colorado deserts and gather moisture from Pacific storms. Without these mountain barriers, all of Southern California would be desert" (p. 1). And yet people have been pushing through these formidable mountain barriers (or attempting to) for centuries. This compelling work shows how fundamental roadways and mountain passes were for the settlement of Southern California. For readers who have traveled the notorious "Grapevine" with trepidation and awe, this is the book for you.

**RINGSIDE TO A REVOLUTION: *An Underground Cultural History of El Paso and Juárez: 1893–1923*.** By David Dorado Romo. (El Paso, TX: Cinco Puntos Press, 2005. 293 pp. \$26.95, cloth.)

A project inspired by the anarchic avant-garde "mappings" of the Situationist International, *Ringside to a Revolution* is a cultural and historical exploration of two geographical sites: cities on either side of the Rio Grande and either side of the Mexico–U.S. border. The author, David Dorado Romo, tells the story of a region marked by hopes and violence of revolutionary energy, delving deeply into the history of individual players through a wide variety of textual and photographic sources. Beautifully written and illustrated, this alternative history cum urban exploration is a treat for readers interested in border culture and politics as well as local history and folklore.

**FIRE IN THE FOREST: *A History of Forest Fire Control on the National Forests in California, 1898–1956*.** By Robert W. Cermek. (United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, 2005. 442 pp. \$27.95, paper.)

This comprehensive history of fire control in California's forests is thorough and well written. With access to over one hundred years of USDA Forest Service records, author Robert Cermek has provided a rich history incorporating environmental studies, the social history of forestry in California, and the politics of negotiating new and effective fire-control policies in an ever-growing state. What makes the text accessible to the more general reader of California history is the placement of forest-fire control within the context of regional boosterism. Cermek does a wonderful job of using tourist maga-



zines like *Westways*, *Sunset*, and *Overland Monthly* to show how the public has been informed (and misinformed) about forest fires and their dangers.

SPANISH REVIVAL ARCHITECTURE. By S. F. "Jerry" Cook III and Tina Skinner. (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, Ltd., 2005. 240 pp. \$49.95, cloth.)

CALIFORNIA COLONIAL HOMES: *Case Studies with Prominent Architects*. By S. F. "Jerry" Cook III and Tina Skinner. (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, Ltd., 2006. 160 pp. \$39.95, cloth.)

Within the fields of Southern California art, architectural, and urban history there are many references to the Spanish revival of the 1920s and 1930s, whose legacy is still prominent throughout the region in the continuing contemporary taste for red tile roofs, adobe walls, and mission-style interior woodwork. This architectural style is often cited in recent scholarship as a physical example of the early twentieth-century reconstruction of regional history whereby Spanish colonialism was rendered a benign Edenic landscape and American conquest an inevitable result of fated manifest destiny. While no such historical or cultural context is offered, these attractive companion volumes on Spanish revival architecture and California colonial homes by Jerry Cook and Tina Skinner helpfully provide interested readers with hundreds of photographic examples of interiors and exteriors of Spanish colonial homes and buildings from the early twentieth century to the pre-WWII period (approximately 1900–1940). Gathered primarily from historic art and architecture magazines, the photographs and architectural case studies provide fodder for the Spanish revival buff and helpful visual evidence for the cultural or architectural historian.

MURDER IN THE GARDEN: *Famous Crimes of Early Fresno County*. By Scott Morrison. (Fresno, CA: Linden Publishing, 2006. 159 pp. \$16.95, paper.)

For fans of the true crime genre, *Murder in the Garden* offers fifteen grisly crimes spanning the period from the turn of the century to the late 1950s. The author has compiled these narratives from court records, police files, and local Fresno newspapers.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN: *Montana's Changing Landscape*. By William Wyckoff. Forward by William Cronon. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006. 196 pp. \$26.95, paper.)

This innovative field guide explores the natural, lived, and urban vernacular landscapes of Montana, stopping along the way to compare and contrast contemporary photographs with those taken by state highway engineers in the 1920s and the 1930s. The effect of exploring an environment in this way is both beautiful and surreal. The accompanying text is well written and provides a useful, and thoughtful, historical context with which to ground the ephemeral sensation created by the bewitching imagery.

**BLACKOUT: *World War II and the Origins of Film Noir*.** By Sheri Chinen Biesen. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005. 243 pp. \$20.00, paper.)

Most contemporary studies of American film noir place its origins in the aftermath of the Second World War. Anxieties about atomic warfare, the surveillance and repression of the McCarthy era, the corresponding phenomena of suburbanization, racial segregation, and urban decline, and the fraught sexual tensions of changing gender norms created audiences for literally dark films laden with pathos, murder, and *femmes fatales*. Biesen argues instead that it was World War II itself that brought the cultural transformation which made shocking filmic violence palatable and even desirable. One chapter in particular, "Rosie the Riveter Goes to Hollywood," does a superb job of placing social anxieties surrounding women's wartime labor at the heart of much noir drama and violence while pointing out that more women were involved in making these early 1940s films than previously acknowledged. This text offers a compelling history of wartime Hollywood and a provocative challenge to current noir scholarship.

**CATHEDRAL OF OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS.** By Msgr. Francis J. Weber. (Los Angeles: Saint Francis Historical Society, 2004. 364 pp. \$29.00, cloth.)

Msgr. Weber's study of the planning, execution, and opening of Los Angeles' new cathedral offers a remarkable and detailed personal journey of this massive architectural project. For readers interested in architectural, budgetary, and political details of the cathedral's construction, this is surely the most comprehensive text to date.

**THE POLITICAL EDGE.** Edited by Chris Carlsson. (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2004. 276 pp. \$17.95, paper.)

This anthology describes the emergent grassroots political movement to elect Green Party candidate Matt Gonzalez mayor of San Francisco. The twenty-five short essays remind us of the enormous energy needed to mobilize our electorate and sustain alternative candidates but also the possibilities of imagining new political futures.

**PURO BORDER: *Dispatches, Snapshots & Graffiti from La Frontera*.** Edited by Luis Humberto Crosthwaite, John William Byrd, and Bobby Byrd. (El Paso, TX: Cinco Puntos Press, 2003. 251 pp. \$18.95, paper.)

This collection of essays about the experience of daily life on the United States-Mexico border is a stunning and moving read. Riddled with violence and fear, aspiration and corruption, border life is described as a juxtaposition of the most powerful and powerless, the citizen and the non-citizen, those who cross by day and those who hide by night. With photo essays, poems, journal entries, newspaper dispatches, statistics, and personal narratives, *Puro Border* makes a devastating human rights issue real, visible, and politically pressing.



## The Curator's Corner

A self-portrait fascinates viewers by what it can reveal about an artist. In this *Self-Portrait* from the 1920s, Tyrus Wong (b.1909, Guangdong, China) portrays himself as a young man in wide leg pants with suspenders-apparel popular in 1920s America. Lounging pensively in the shade of a craggy tree, with brush, ink, and paper at the ready, the artist's contemplative air resembles the reclusive literati scholar-artists in traditional Chinese landscape paintings. The young artist gazes into the distance, waiting for an inspiration to spark the creative process. Perhaps he dreams about a life of boundless possibilities for himself and his art.

What the painting does not show is equally revealing about how the artist views himself and his place in the world. This is the only self-portrait Wong has painted. It once belonged to cinematographer James Wong Howe. Wong depicts an idealized, imaginary life apart from the reality that Wong faced as a young Chinese immigrant trying to belong in an America in which Chinese immigration was illegal and Chinese people could not become naturalized citizens. Despite such discrimination, Wong would become renowned and acclaimed for his unique synthesis of traditional Chinese and modern Western aesthetics. While art would continue to be the substance of daily life for Wong, his life rarely resembled the dreamy, insular existence pictured here. Growing up in Los Angeles' original Chinatown, Wong has always been a dedicated family man and part of a tightly knit Chinese American community. Through his study at Otis Art Institute and his professional career at Disney and Warner Brothers Studios, Wong succeeded in establishing himself as an artist of distinction amidst a thriving local arts community.

Has the artist's real life of 96 years come to fulfill or outshine his 1920s portrait of a youthful daydream?  
—SONIA MAK, CURATOR

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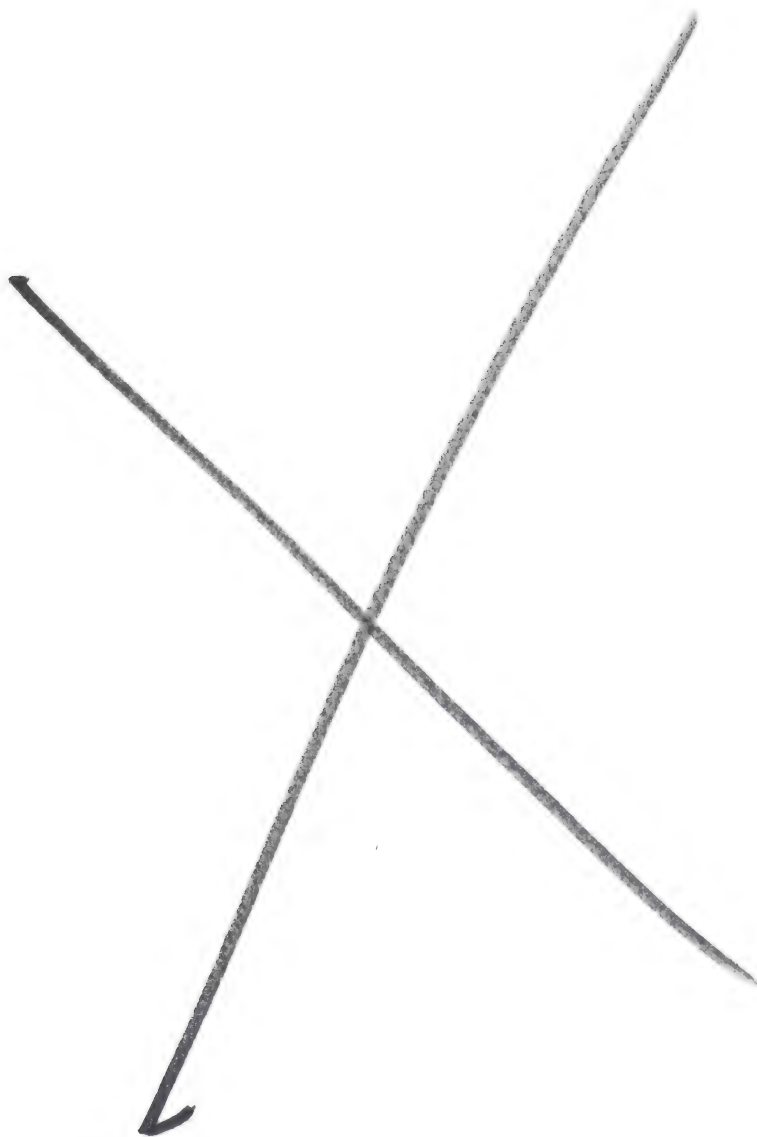
Admission: suggested donation of \$3 for adults,

\$2 for students/seniors, children are free.



Self Portrait by Tyrus Wong (undated; ink and wash on paper).  
*Courtesy of the Chinese American Museum.*





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